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COWPER'S MILTON,

IN

FOUR VOLUMES.

Nec satis hoc visum est in utrumque, et nec pia cessant
Officia in tumulo.

MANSUS.

VOL. IV.

Chichester:
PRINTED BY W. MASON,
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LONDON.

1810.

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THE

FIRST BOOK

OF

PARADISE REGAINED.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Subject proposed. Invocation of the Holy Spirit. —The Poem opens with John baptizing at the river Jordan. Jesus coming there is baptized; and is attested, by the descent of the Holy Ghost, and by a voice from Heaven, to be the Son of God. Satan who is present, upon this immediately flies up into the regions of the air; where, summoning his Infernal Council, he acquaints them with his apprehensions that Jesus is that seed of the Woman, destined to destroy all their power, and points out to them the immediate necessity of bringing the matter to proof, and of attempting by snares and fraud, to counteract and defeat the person, from whom they have so much to dread. This Office he offers himself to undertake: and, his offer being accepted, sets out on his enterprise.—In the mean time God, in the assembly of Holy Angels, declares that he has given up his Son to be tempted by Satan; but foretells that the Tempter shall be completely defeated by him:—upon which the Angels sing a hymn of triumph. Jesus is led up by the Spirit into the wilderness, while he is meditating on the commencement of his great office of Saviour of Mankind. Pursuing his meditations he narrates, in a soliloquy, what divine and philanthropick impulses he had felt from his early youth, and how his mother Mary, on perceiving these dispositions in him, had acquainted him with the circumstances of his birth, and informed him that he was no less a person than the Son of God; to which he adds what his own inquiries and reflections had supplied in confirmation of this great truth, and particularly dwells on the recent attestation of it at the

river Jordan. Our Lord passes forty days, fasting in the wilderness; where the wild beasts become mild and harmless in his presence. Satan now appears under the form of an old peasant; and enters into discourse with our Lord, wondering what could have brought him alone into so dangerous a place, and at the same time professing to recognize him for the person lately acknowledged by John, at the river Jordan, to be the Son of God. Jesus briefly replies. Satan rejoins with a description of the difficulty of supporting life in the wilderness; and entreats Jesus, if he be really the Son of God, to manifest his divine power, by changing some of the stones into bread. Jesus reproves him, and at the same time tells him that he knows who he is. Satan instantly avows himself, and offers an artful apology for himself and his conduct. Our blessed Lord severely reprimands him, and refutes every part of his justification. Satan, with much semblance of humility, still endeavours to justify himself; and, professing his admiration of Jesus and his regard for virtue, requests to be permitted at a future time to hear more of his conversation; but is answered, that this must be as he shall find permission from above. Satan then disappears, and the Book closes with a short description of night coming on in the desart.

PARADISE REGAINED.

BOOK I.

I, who ere while the happy garden sung
By one Man's disobedience lost, now sing
Recover'd Paradise to all mankind,
By one Man's firm obedience fully tried
Through all temptation, and the Tempter foil'd,
In all his wiles, defeated and repuls'd,
And Eden rais'd in the waste wilderness.
Thou Spirit, who ledst this glorious eremite
Into the desart, his victorious field,
Against the spiritual foe, and brought'st him thence
By proof the undoubted Son of God, inspire,
As thou art wont, my prompted song, else mute,
And bear, through highth or depth of Nature's bounds,

With prosperous wing full summ'd, to tell of deeds
Above heroic, though in secret done,
And unrecorded left through many an age;
Worthy to have not remain'd so long unsung.
Now had the great Proclaimer with a voice
More awful than the sound of trumpet, cried
Repentance, and Heaven's kingdom nigh at hand
To all baptiz'd: To his great baptism flock'd
With awe the regions round, and with them came
From Nazareth the son of Joseph deem'd
To the flood Jordan; came, as then obscure,
Unmark'd, unknown; but from the Baptist soon
Descried, divinely warn'd, and witness bore
As to his worthier, and would have resign'd
To him his heavenly office; nor was long
His witness unconfirm'd: on him baptiz'd
Heaven open'd, and in likeness of a dove
The Spirit descended, while the Father's voice
From Heaven pronounc'd him his beloved Son.
That heard the Adversary, who, roving still
About the world, at that assembly fam'd
Would not be last, and, with the voice divine
Nigh thunder-struck, the exalted Man, to whom
Such high attest was given, a while survey'd
With wonder; then, with envy fraught and rage,
Flies to his place, nor rests, but in mid air
To counsel summons all his mighty peers,
Within thick clouds and dark ten-fold involv'd,

A gloomy consistory; and them amidst,
With looks aghast and sad, he thus bespake.
O ancient Powers of air and this wide world,
(For much more willingly I mention air
This our old conquest, than remember Hell,
Our hated habitation,) well ye know
How many ages, as the years of men,
This universe we have possess'd, and rul'd,
In manner at our will, the affairs of earth,
Since Adam and his facile consort Eve
Lost Paradise, deceiv'd by me; though since
With dread attending when that fatal wound
Shall be inflicted by the seed of Eve
Upon my head. Long the decrees of Heaven
Delay, for longest time to him is short;
And now, too soon for us, the circling hours
This dreaded time have compass'd, wherein we
Must bide the stroke of that long-threaten'd wound,
(At least if so we can and by thy head
Broken be not intended all our power
To be infring'd, our freedom and our being,
In this fair empire won of earth and air,)
For this ill news I bring, the Woman's Seed,
Destin'd to this, is late of Woman born.
His birth to our just fear gave no small cause:
But his growth now to youth's full flower, displaying
All virtue, grace, and wisdom to achieve

Things highest, greatest, multiplies my fear.
Before him a great Prophet, to proclaim
His coming, is sent harbinger, who all
Invites, and in the consecrated stream
Pretends to wash off sin, and fit them, so
Purified, to receive him pure, or rather
To do him honour as their king: All come,
And he himself among them was baptiz'd;
Not thence to be more pure, but to receive
The testimony of Heaven, that who he is
Thenceforth the nations may not doubt: I saw
The Prophet do him reverence: on him, rising
Out of the water, Heaven above the clouds
Unfold her crystal doors; thence on his head
A perfect dove descend, (whate'er it meant,)
And out of Heaven the sovran voice I heard,
"This is my Son belov'd, in him am pleas'd."
His mother then is mortal, but his Sire
He who obtains the monarchy of Heaven:
And what will he not do to advance his Son?
His first-begot we know, and sore have felt,
When his fierce thunder drove us to the deep:
Who this is we must learn, for Man he seems
In all his lineaments, though in his face
The glimpses of his Father's glory shine.
Ye see our danger on the utmost edge
Of hazard, which admits no long debate,

But must with something sudden be oppos'd,
(Not force, but well-couch'd fraud, well-woven snares,)
Ere in the head of nations he appear,
Their king, their leader, and supreme on earth.
I, when no other durst, sole undertook
The dismal expedition to find out
And ruin Adam; and the exploit perform'd
Successfully: a calmer voyage now
Will waft me; and the way, found prosperous once,
Induces best to hope of like success.
He ended, and his words impression left
Of much amazement to the infernal crew,
Distracted and surpris'd with deep dismay
At these sad tidings; but no time was then
For long indulgence to their fears or grief:
Unanimous they all commit the care
And management of this main enterprise
To him, their great dictator, whose attempt
At first against mankind so well had thriv'd
In Adam's overthrow, and led their march
From Hell's deep-vaulted den to dwell in light,
Regents, and potentates, and kings, yea Gods,
Of many a pleasant realm and province wide.
So to the coast of Jordan he directs
His easy steps, girded with snaky wiles,
Where he might likeliest find this new-declar'd,
This Man of Men, attested Son of God,

Temptation and all guile on him to try;
So to subvert whom he suspected rais'd
To end his reign on earth, so long enjoy'd:
But, contrary, unweeting he fulfill'd
The purpos'd counsel, pre-ordain'd and fix'd,
Of the Most High; who, in full frequence bright
Of Angels, thus to Gabriel smiling spake.
Gabriel, this day by proof thou shalt behold,
Thou and all Angels conversant on earth
With man or men's affairs, how I begin
To verify that solemn message, late
On which I sent thee to the virgin pure
In Galilee, that she should bear a son,
Great in renown, and call'd the Son of God;
Then told'st her, doubting how these things could be
To her a virgin, that on her should come
The Holy Ghost, and the power of the Highest
O'ershadow her. This Man, born and now upgrown
To show him worthy of his birth divine
And high prediction, henceforth I expose
To Satan; let him tempt, and now assay
His utmost subtlety, because he boasts
And vaunts of his great cunning to the throng
Of his apostasy: he might have learnt
Less overweening, since he fail'd in Job,
Whose constant perseverance overcame
Whate'er his cruel malice could invent.
He now shall know I can produce a Man,

Of female seed, far abler to resist
All his solicitations, and at length
All his vast force, and drive him back to Hell;
Winning, by conquest, what the first Man lost,
By fallacy surpris'd. But first I mean
To exercise him in the wilderness:
There he shall first lay down the rudiments
Of his great warfare, ere I send him forth
To conquer Sin and Death, the two grand foes,
By humiliation and strong sufferance:
His weakness shall o'ercome Satanick strength,
And all the world, and mass of sinful flesh,
That all the Angels and ethereal Powers,
They now, and Men hereafter, may discern,
From what consummate virtue I have chose
This perfect Man, by merit call'd my Son,
To earn salvation for the sons of men.

So spake the Eternal Father, and all Heaven
Admiring stood a space, then into hymns
Burst forth, and in celestial measures mov'd,
Circling the throne and singing, while the hand
Sung with the voice, and this the argument.

Victory and triumph to the Son of God,
Now entering his great duel, not of arms,
But to vanquish by wisdom hellish wiles!
The Father knows the Son; therefore secure
Ventures his filial virtue, though untried,
Against whate'er may tempt, whate'er seduce,

Allure, or terrify, or undermine.
Be frustrate, all ye stratagems of Hell,
And, devilish machinations, come to nought!
So they in Heaven their odes and vigils tun'd:
Mean while the Son of God, who yet some days
Lodg'd in Bethabara, where John baptiz'd,
Musing, and much revolving in his breast,
How best the mighty work he might begin
Of Saviour to mankind, and which way first
Publish his God-like office now mature,
One day forth walk'd alone, the Spirit leading
And his deep thoughts, the better to converse
With solitude, till, far from track of men,
Thought following thought, and step by step led on,
He enter'd now the bordering desart wild,
And, with dark shades and rocks environ'd round,
His holy meditations thus pursued.
O, what a multitude of thoughts at once
Awaken'd in me swarm, while I consider
What from within I feel myself, and hear
What from without comes often to my ears,
Ill sorting with my present state compar'd!
When I was yet a child, no childish play
To me was pleasing; all my mind was set
Serious to learn and know, and thence to do
What might be publick good; myself I thought
Born to that end, born to promote all truth,
All righteous things: therefore, above my years,
The law of God I read, and found it sweet,

Made it my whole delight, and in it grew
To such perfection, that, ere yet my age
Had measur'd twice six years, at our great feast
I went into the temple, there to hear
The teachers of our law, and to propose
What might improve my knowledge or their own;
And was admir'd by all: yet this not all
To which my spirit aspir'd; victorious deeds
Flam'd in my heart, heroick acts; one while
To rescue Israel from the Roman yoke,
Then to subdue and quell, o'er all the earth,
Brute violence and proud tyrannick power,
Till truth were freed, and equity restor'd:
Yet held it more humane, more heavenly, first
By winning words to conquer willing hearts,
And make persuasion do the work of fear;
At least to try, and teach the erring soul,
Not wilfully misdoing, but unware
Misled; the stubborn only to subdue.
These growing thoughts my mother soon perceiving
By words at times cast forth, inly rejoic'd,
And said to me apart, "High are thy thoughts,
O Son, but nourish them, and let them soar
To what highth sacred virtue and true worth
Can raise them, though above example high;
By matchless deeds express thy matchless sire,
For know, thou art no son of mortal man;
Though men esteem thee low of parentage,

Thy father is the Eternal King who rules
All Heaven and Earth, Angels and sons of men;
A messenger from God foretold thy birth
Conceiv'd in me a virgin; he foretold,
Thou should'st be great, and sit on David's throne,
And of thy kingdom there should be no end.
At thy nativity, a glorious quire
Of Angels, in the fields of Bethlehem, sung
To shepherds, watching at their folds by night
And told them the Messiah now was born,
Where they might see him, and to thee they came,
Directed to the manger where thou lay'st,
For in the inn was left no better room:
A star, not seen before, in Heaven appearing,
Guided the wise men thither from the east,
To honour thee with incense, myrrh, and gold;
By whose bright course led on they found the place,
Affirming it thy star, new-graven in Heaven,
By which they knew the King of Israel born.
Just Simeon, and prophetick Anna, warn'd
By vision, found thee in the temple, and spake,
Before the altar and the vested priest,
Like things of thee to all that present stood."—
This having heard, straight I again revolv'd
The Law and Prophets, searching what was writ
Concerning the Messiah, to our scribes
Known partly, and soon found, of whom they spake
I am; this chiefly, that my way must lie

Through many a hard assay, even to the death,
Ere I the promis'd kingdom can attain,
Or work redemption for mankind, whose
Full weight must be transferr'd upon my head.
Yet, neither thus dishearten'd or dismay'd,
The time prefix'd I waited; when behold
The Baptist, (of whose birth I oft had heard,
Not knew by sight,) now come, who was to come
Before Messiah, and his way prepare!
I, as all others, to his baptism came,
Which I believ'd was from above; but he
Straight knew me, and with loudest voice proclaim'd
Me him, (for it was shewn him so from Heaven,)
Me him, whose harbinger he was; and first
Refus'd on me his baptism to confer,
As much his greater, and was hardly won:
But, as I rose out of the laving stream,
Heaven opened her eternal doors, from whence
The Spirit descended on me like a dove;
And last, the sum of all, my Father's voice,
Audibly heard from Heaven, pronounc'd me his,
Me his beloved Son, in whom alone
He was well pleas'd; by which I knew the time
Now full, that I no more should live obscure,
But openly begin, as best becomes,
The authority which I deriv'd from Heaven.
And now by some strong motion I am led

Into this wilderness, to what intent
I learn not yet; perhaps I need not know,
For what concerns my knowledge God reveals.
So spake our Morning-star, then in his rise,
And, looking round, on every side beheld
A pathless desart, dusk with horrid shades;
The way he came not having mark'd, return
Was difficult, by human steps untrod:
And he still on was led, but with such thoughts
Accompanied of things past and to come
Lodg'd in his breast, as well might recommend
Such solitude before choicest society.
Full forty days he pass'd, whether on hill
Sometimes, anon on shady vale, each night
Under the covert of some ancient oak
Or cedar to defend him from the dew,
Or harbour'd in some cave, is not reveal'd;
Nor tasted human food, nor hunger felt
Till those days ended; hunger'd then at last
Among wild beasts: they at his sight grew mild,
Nor sleeping him nor waking harm'd; his walk
The fiery serpent fled and noxious worm,
The lion and fierce tiger glar'd aloof.
But now an aged man in rural weeds,
Following, as seem'd, the quest of some stray ewe
Or wither'd sticks to gather, which might serve
Against a winter's day, when winds blow keen,
To warm him wet return'd from field at eve,

He saw approach, who first with curious eye
Perus'd him, then with words thus utter'd spake.
Sir, what ill chance hath brought thee to this place
So far from path or road of men, who pass
In troop or caravan? for single none
Durst ever, who return'd, and dropt not here
His carcass, pin'd with hunger and with drouth.
I ask the rather, and the more admire,
For that to me thou seem'st the Man, whom late
Our new baptizing Prophet at the ford
Of Jordan honour'd so, and call'd thee Son
Of God: I saw and heard, for we sometimes
Who dwell this wild, constrain'd by want, come forth
To town or village nigh, (nighest is far,)
Where aught we hear, and curious are to hear
What happens new; fame also finds us out.
To whom the Son of God. Who brought me hither,
Will bring me hence; no other guide I seek.
By miracle he may, replied the swain;
What other way I see not; for we here
Live on tough roots and shrubs, to thirst inur'd
More than the camel, and to drink go far,
Men to much misery and hardship born:
But, if thou be the Son of God, command
That out of these hard stones be made thee bread,
So shalt thou save thyself, and us relieve

With food, whereof we wretched seldom taste.
He ended, and the Son of God replied.
Think'st thou such force in bread? Is it not written,
(For I discern thee other than thou seem'st,)
Man lives not by bread only, but each word
Proceeding from the mouth of God, who fed
Our fathers here with manna? In the mount
Moses was forty days, nor eat, nor drank;
And forty days Elijah, without food,
Wander'd this barren waste; the same I now:
Why dost thou then suggest to me distrust,
Knowing who I am, as I know who thou art?
Whom thus answer'd the Arch-Fiend, now undisguis'd.
'Tis true I am that Spirit unfortunate,
Who, leagu'd with millions more in rash revolt,
Kept not my happy station, but was driven
With them from bliss to the bottomless deep,
Yet to that hideous place not so confin'd
By rigour unconniving, but that oft,
Leaving my dolorous prison, I enjoy
Large liberty to round this globe of earth,
Or range in the air; nor from the Heaven of Heavens
Hath he excluded my resort sometimes.
I came among the sons of God, when he
Gave up into my hands Uzzean Job
To prove him and illustrate his high worth;
And, when to all his Angels he propos'd

To draw the proud king Ahab into fraud
That he might fall in Ramoth, they demurring,
I undertook that office, and the tongues
Of all his flattering prophets glibb'd with lies
To his destruction, as I had in charge;
For what he bids I do. Though I have lost
Much lustre of my native brightness, lost
To be belov'd of God, I have not lost
To love, at least contemplate and admire,
What I see excellent in good, or fair,
Or virtuous; I should so have lost all sense:
What can be then less in me than desire
To see thee and approach thee, whom I know
Declar'd the Son of God, to hear attent
Thy wisdom, and behold thy God-like deeds?
Men generally think me much a foe
To all mankind: why should I? they to me
Never did wrong or violence; by them
I lost not what I lost, rather by them
I gain'd what I have gain'd, and with them dwell,
Copartner in these regions of the world,
If not disposer; lend them oft my aid,
Oft my advice by presages and signs,
And answers, oracles, portents, and dreams,
Whereby they may direct their future life.
Envy they say excites me, thus to gain
Companions of my misery and woe.
At first it may be; but, long since with woe

Nearer acquainted, now I feel, by proof,
That fellowship in pain divides not smart,
Nor lightens aught each man's peculiar load.
Small consolation then, were man adjoin'd:
This wounds me most, (what can it less?) that Man,
Man fall'n shall be restor'd, I never more.
To whom our Saviour sternly thus replied.
Deservedly thou griev'st, compos'd of lies
From the beginning, and in lies wilt end;
Who boast'st release from Hell, and leave to come
Into the Heaven of Heaven's: Thou com'st indeed
As a poor miserable captive thrall
Comes to the place where he before had sat
Among the prime in splendour, now depos'd,
Ejected, emptied, gaz'd, unpitied, shunn'd,
A spectacle of ruin, or of scorn,
To all the host of Heaven: The happy place
Imparts to thee no happiness, no joy,
Rather inflames thy torment; representing
Lost bliss, to thee no more communicable,
So never more in Hell than when in Heaven.
But thou art serviceable to Heaven's King.
Wilt thou impute to obedience what thy fear
Extorts, or pleasure to do ill excites?
What but thy malice mov'd thee to misdeem
Of righteous Job, then cruelly to afflict him
With all inflictions? but his patience won.
The other service was thy chosen task,

To be a liar in four hundred mouths;
For lying in is thy sustenance, thy food.
Yet thou pretend'st to truth; all oracles
By thee are given, and what confess'd more true
Among the nations? that hath been thy craft,
By mixing somewhat true to vent more lies.
But what have been thy answers, what but dark,
Ambiguous, and with double sense deluding,
Which they who ask'd have seldom understood,
And not well understood as good not known?
Who ever by consulting at thy shrine
Return'd the wiser, or the more instruct,
To fly or follow what concern'd him most,
And run not sooner to his fatal snare?
For God hath justly given the nations up
To thy delusions; justly, since they fell
Idolatrous; but, when his purpose is
Among them to declare his providence
To thee not known, whence hast thou then thy truth,
But from him, or his Angels president
In every province, who, themselves disdaining
To approach thy temples, give thee in command
What, to the smallest tittle, thou shalt say
To thy adorers? Thou, with trembling fear,
Or like a fawning parasite, obey'st:
Then to thyself ascrib'st the truth foretold.
But this thy glory shall be soon retrench'd;
No more shalt thou by oracling abuse

The Gentiles; henceforth oracles are ceas'd,
And thou no more with pomp and sacrifice
Shalt be inquir'd at Delphos, or elsewhere;
At least in vain, for they shall find thee mute.
God hath now sent his living oracle
Into the world to teach his final will,
And sends his Spirit of truth henceforth to dwell
In pious hearts, an inward oracle
To all truth requisite for men to know.
So spake our Saviour; but the subtle Fiend,
Though inly stung with anger and disdain,
Dissembled, and this answer smooth return'd.
Sharply thou hast insisted on rebuke,
And urg'd me hard with doings, which not will
But misery hath wrested from me. Where
Easily canst thou find one miserable,
And not enforc'd oft-times to part from truth,
If it may stand him more in stead to lie,
Say and unsay, feign, flatter, or abjure?
But thou art plac'd above me, thou art Lord;
From thee I can, and must submiss, endure,
Check or reproof, and glad to 'scape so quit.
Hard are the ways of truth, and rough to walk,
Smooth on the tongue discours'd, pleasing to the ear,
And tuneable as sylvan pipe or song;
What wonder then if I delight to hear
Her dictates from thy mouth; Most men admire
Virtue, who follow not her lore: permit me

To hear thee when I come, (since no man comes,)
And talk at least, though I despair to attain.
Thy Father, who is holy, wise and pure,
Suffers the hypocrite or atheous priest
To tread his sacred courts, and minister
About his altar, handling holy things,
Praying or vowing; and vouchsaf'd his voice
To Balaam reprobate, a prophet yet
Inspir'd: disdain not such access to me.
  To whom our Saviour, with unalter'd brow:
Thy coming hither, though I know thy scope,
I bid not, or forbid; do as thou find'st
Permission from above; thou canst not more.
  He added not; and Satan, bowing low
His gray dissimulation, disappear'd
Into thin air diffus'd: for now began
Night with her sullen wings to double shade
The desart; fowls in their clay nests were couch'd;
And now wild beasts came forth the woods to roam.

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

THE

SECOND BOOK

OF

PARADISE REGAINED.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Disciples of Jesus, uneasy at his long absence, reason amongst themselves concerning it. Mary also gives vent to her maternal anxiety: in the expression of which she recapitulates many circumstances respecting the birth and early life of her Son.——Satan again meets his Infernal Council, reports the bad success of his temptation of our Blessed Lord, and calls upon them for counsel and assistance. Belial proposes the tempting of Jesus with women. Satan rebukes Belial for his dissoluteness, charging on him all the profligacy of that kind ascribed by the poets to the Heathen Gods, and rejects his proposal as in no respect likely to succeed. Satan then suggests other modes of temptation, particularly proposing to avail himself of the circumstance of our Lord's hungering; and taking a band of chosen Spirits with him, returns to resume his enterprise. Jesus hungers in the desart. Night comes on; the manner in which our Saviour passes the night is described. Morning advances. Satan again appears to Jesus, and, after expressing wonder that he should be so entirely neglected in the wilderness, where others had been miraculously fed, tempts him with a sumptuous banquet of the most luxurious kind. This he rejects, and the banquet vanishes.——Satan, finding our Lord not to be assailed on the ground of appetite, tempts him again by offering him riches, as the means of acquiring power: This Jesus also rejects, producing many instances of great actions performed by persons under virtuous poverty, and specifying the danger of riches, and the cares and pains inseparable from power and greatness.

PARADISE REGAINED.

BOOK II.

MEAN while the new-baptiz'd, who yet remain'd
At Jordan with the Baptist, and had seen
Him whom they heard so late expressly call'd
Jesus Messiah, Son of God declar'd,
And on that high authority had believ'd,
And with him talk'd, and with him lodg'd; I mean
Andrew and Simon, famous after known,
With others though in Holy Writ not nam'd;
Now missing him, their joy so lately found,
(So lately found, and so abruptly gone,)
Began to doubt, and doubted many days,
And, as the days encreas'd, encreas'd their doubt.
Sometimes they thought he might be only shown,
And for a time caught up to God, as once

Moses was in the mount and missing long,
And the great Thisbite, who on fiery wheels
Rode up to Heaven, yet once again to come:
Therefore, as those young prophets then with care
Sought lost Elijah, so in each place these
Nigh to Bethabara, in Jericho
The city of palms, Ænon, and Salem old,
Machærus, and each town or city wall'd
On this side the broad lake Genezaret,
Or in Peræa; but return'd in vain.
Then on the bank of Jordan, by a creek,
Where winds with reeds and osiers whispering play,
Plain fishermen, (no greater men them call,)
Close in a cottage low together got,
Their unexpected loss and plaints out breath'd.
Alas, from what high hope to what relapse
Unlook'd for are we fall'n! our eyes beheld
Messiah certainly now come, so long
Expected of our fathers; we have heard
His words, his wisdom full of grace and truth:
Now, now, for sure, deliverance is at hand,
The kingdom shall to Israël be restor'd;
Thus we rejoic'd, but soon our joy is turn'd
Into perplexity and new amaze:
For whither is he gone, what accident
Hath rapt him from us? will he now retire
After appearance, and again prolong
Our expectation? God of Israel,

Send thy Messiah forth, the time is come;
Behold the kings of the earth, how they oppress
Thy chosen; to what highth their power unjust
They have exalted, and behind them cast
All fear of thee; arise, and vindicate
Thy glory; free thy people from their yoke.
But let us wait; thus far he hath perform'd,
Sent his Anointed, and to us reveal'd him,
By his great Prophet, pointed at and shown
In publick, and with him we have convers'd;
Let us be glad of this, and all our fears
Lay on his Providence; he will not fail,
Nor will withdraw him now, nor will recall,
Mock us with his blest sight, then snatch him hence;
Soon we shall see our Hope, our Joy, return.
Thus they, out of their plaints, new hope resume
To find whom at the first they found unsought:
But, to his mother Mary, when she saw
Others return'd from Baptism, not her son,
Nor left at Jordan, tidings of him none,
Within her breast though calm, her breast though pure,
Motherly cares and fears got head, and rais'd
Some troubled thoughts, which she in sighs thus clad.
O, what avails me now that honour high
To have conceiv'd of God, or that salute.
"Hail highly favour'd, among women blest!"

While I to sorrows am no less advanc'd,
And fears as eminent, above the lot
Of other women, by the birth I bore;
In such a season born, when scarce a shed
Could be obtain'd to shelter him or me
From the bleak air; a stable was our warmth,
A manger his; yet soon enforc'd to fly
Thence into Egypt, till the murderous king
Were dead, who sought his life, and missing fill'd
With infant blood the streets of Bethlehem;
From Egypt home return'd, in Nazareth
Hath been our dwelling many years; his life
Private, unactive, calm, contemplative,
Little suspicious to any king; but now,
Full grown to man, acknowledg'd, as I hear,
By John the Baptist, and in publick shown,
Son own'd from Heaven by his Father's voice,
I look'd for some great change; to honour? no,
But trouble, as old Simeon plain foretold,
That to the fall and rising he should be
Of many in Israël, and so a sign
Spoken against, that through my very soul
A sword shall pierce: This is my favour'd lot,
My exaltation to afflictions high;
Afflicted I may be, it seems, and blest;
I will not argue that, nor will repine.
But where delays he now? some great intent
Conceals him: when twelve years he scarce had seen

I lost him, but so found, as well I saw
He could not lose himself, but went about
His Father's business; what he meant I mus'd,
Since understand; much more his absence now
Thus long to some great purpose he obscures.
But I to wait with patience am inur'd;
My heart hath been a store-house long of things
And sayings laid up, portending strange events.
Thus Mary, pondering oft, and oft to mind
Recalling what remarkably had pass'd
Since first her salutation heard, with thoughts
Meekly compos'd awaited the fulfilling:
The while her son, tracing the desart wild,
Sole, but with holiest meditations fed,
Into himself descended, and at once
All his great work to come before him set;
How to begin, how to accomplish best
His end of being on earth, and mission high:
For Satan, with sly preface to return,
Had left him vacant, and with speed was gone
Up to the middle region of thick air,
Where all his potentates in council sat;
There, without sign of boast, or sign of joy,
Solicitous and blank, he thus began.
Princes, Heaven's ancient Sons, ethereal Thrones;
Demonian Spirits now, from the element
Each of his reign allotted, rightlier call'd
Powers of fire, air, water, and earth beneath:

(So may we hold our place and these mild seats
Without new trouble,) such an enemy
Is risen to invade us, who no less
Threatens than our expulsion down to Hell;
I, as I undertook, and with the vote
Consenting in full frequence was impower'd,
Have found him, view'd him, tasted him; but find
Far other labour to be undergone
Than when I dealt with Adam, first of Men,
Though Adam by his wife's allurement fell,
However to this Man inferiour far;
If he be Man by mother's side, at least
With more than human gifts from Heaven adorn'd,
Perfections absolute, graces divine,
And amplitude of mind to greatest deeds.
Therefore I am return'd, lest confidence
Of my success with Eve in Paradise
Deceive ye to persuasion over-sure
Of like succeeding here: I summon all
Rather to be in readiness, with hand
Or counsel to assist; lest I, who erst
Thought none my equal, now be over-match'd.
So spake the old Serpent, doubting; and from all
With clamour was assured their utmost aid
At his command: when from amidst them rose
Belial, the dissolutest Spirit that fell,
The sensuallest, and, after Asmodai,
The fleshliest Incubus; and thus advis'd.

Set women in his eye, and in his walk,
Among the daughters of men the fairest found:
Many are in each region passing fair
As the noon sky; more like to Goddesses
Than mortal creatures, graceful and discreet,
Expert in amorous arts, enchanting tongues
Persuasive, virgin majesty with mild
And sweet allay'd, yet terrible to approach,
Skill'd to retire, and, in retiring, draw
Hearts after them tangled in amorous nets.
Such object hath the power to soften and tame
Severest temper, smooth the rugged'st brow,
Enerve, and with voluptuous hope dissolve,
Draw out with credulous desire, and lead
At will the manliest, and resolutest breast,
As the magnetick hardest iron draws.
Women, when nothing else, beguil'd the heart
Of wisest Solomon, and made him build,
And made him bow, to the Gods of his wives.
To whom quick answer Satan thus return'd.
Belial, in much uneven scale thou weigh'st
All others by thyself; because of old
Thou thyself doat'st on womankind, admiring
Their shape, their colour, and attractive grace
None are, thou think'st, but taken with such toys.
Before the Flood thou with thy lusty crew,
False titled sons of God, roaming the earth

Cast wanton eyes on the daughters of men,
And coupled with them, and begot a race.
Have we not seen, or by relation heard,
In courts and regal chambers how thou lurk'st,
In wood or grove, by mossy fountain side,
In valley or green meadow, to way-lay
Some beauty rare, Calisto, Clymene,
Daphne, or Semele, Antiopa,
Or Amymone, Syrinx, many more
Too long, then lay'st thy scapes on names ador'd,
Apollo, Neptune, Jupiter, or Pan
Satyr, or Faun, or Sylvan? But these haunts
Delight not all: among the sons of men,
How many have with a smile made small account
Of Beauty and her lures, easily scorn'd
All her assaults, on worthier things intent!
Remember that Pellean conquerour,
A youth, how all the beauties of the East
He slightly view'd, and slightly overpass'd;
How he, surnam'd of Africa, dismiss'd,
In his prime youth, the fair Iberian maid.
For Solomon, he liv'd at ease, and full
Of honour, wealth, high fare, aim'd not beyond
Higher design than to enjoy his state;
Thence to the bait of women lay expos'd:
But he, whom we attempt, is wiser far
Than Solomon, of more exalted mind,

Made and set wholly on the accomplishment
Of greatest things. What woman will you find,
Though of this age the wonder and the fame
On whom his leisure will vouchsafe an eye
Of fond desire? Or should she, confident,
As sitting queen ador'd on Beauty's throne,
Descend with all her winning charms begirt
To enamour, as the zone of Venus once
Wrought that effect on Jove, so fables tell;
How would one look from his majestick brow,
Seated as on the top of Virtue's hill,
Discountenance her despis'd, and put to rout
All her array; her female pride deject,
Or turn to reverent awe! for Beauty stands
In the admiration only of weak minds
Led captive; cease to admire, and all her plumes
Fall flat, and shrink into a trivial toy,
At every sudden slighting quite abash'd.
Therefore with manlier objects we must try
His constancy: with such as have more show
Of worth, of honour, glory, and popular praise,
Rocks, whereon greatest men have oftest wreck'd;
Or that which only seems to satisfy
Lawful desires of nature, not beyond;
And now I know he hungers, where no food
Is to be found, in the wide wilderness:
The rest commit to me; I shall let pass

No advantage, and his strength as oft assay.
He ceas'd, and heard their grant in loud acclaim;
Then forthwith to him takes a chosen band
Of Spirits, likest to himself in guile,
To be at hand, and at his beck appear,
If cause were to unfold some active scene
Of various persons, each to know his part:
Then to the desart takes with these his flight;
Where, still from shade to shade, the Son of God
After forty days fasting had remain'd,
Now hungering first, and to himself thus said.
Where will this end? four times ten days I've pass'd
Wandering this woody maze, and human food
Nor tasted, nor had appetite; that fast
To virtue I impute not, or count part
Of what I suffer here; if nature need not,
Or God support nature with repast
Though needing, what praise is it to endure?
But now I feel I hunger, which declares
Nature hath need of what she asks; yet God
Can satisfy that need some other way,
Though hunger still remain; so it remain
Without this body's wasting, I content me,
And from the sting of famine fear no harm:
Nor mind it, fed with better thoughts, that feed
Me hungering more to do my Father's will.

It was the hour of night, when thus the Son
Commun'd in silent walk, then laid him down
Under the hospitable covert nigh
Of trees thick interwoven; there he slept,
And dream'd, as appetite is wont to dream,
Of meats and drinks, nature's refreshment sweet:
Him thought, he by the brook of Cherith stood,
And saw the ravens with their horny beaks
Food to Elijah bringing, even and morn,
Though ravenous, taught to abstain from what they brought:
He saw the Prophet also, how he fled
Into the desart, and how there he slept
Under a juniper; then how awak'd
He found his supper on the coals prepar'd,
And by the Angel was bid rise and eat,
And eat the second time after repose,
The strength whereof suffic'd him forty days:
Sometimes that with Elijah he partook
Or as a guest with Daniel at his pulse.
Thus wore out night, and now the herald lark
Left his ground-nest, high towering to descry
The Morn's approach, and greet her with his song:
As lightly from his grassy couch up rose
Our Saviour, and found all was but a dream;
Fasting he went to sleep, and fasting wak'd.
Up to a hill anon his steps he rear'd,

From whose high top to ken the prospect round,
If cottage were in view, sheep-cote, or herd;
But cottage, herd, or sheep-cote, none he saw;
Only in a bottom saw a pleasant grove,
With chant of tuneful birds resounding loud:
Thither he bent his way, determin'd there
To rest at noon, and enter'd soon the shade
High-roof'd, and walks beneath, and alleys brown,
That open'd in the midst a woody scene;
Nature's own work it seem'd, Nature taught Art,
And, to a superstitious eye, the haunt
Of Wood-Gods and Wood-Nymphs: he view'd it round
When suddenly a man before him stood;
Not rustick as before, but seemlier clad,
As one in city, or court, or palace bred,
And with fair speech these words to him address'd.
With granted leave officious I return,
But much more wonder that the Son of God
In this wild solitude so long should bide,
Of all things destitute; and, well I know,
Not without hunger. Others of some note,
As story tell, have trod this wilderness;
The fugitive bond-woman, with her son
Out-cast Nebaioth, yet found here relief
By a providing Angel; all the race
Of Israel here had famish'd, had not God
Rain'd from Heaven manna; and that Prophet bold,
Native of Thebez, wandering here was fed

Twice by a voice inviting him to eat:
Of thee these forty days none hath regard,
Forty and more deserted here indeed.
To whom thus Jesus, What conclud'st thou hence?
They all had need; I, as thou seest, have none.
How hast thou hunger then? Satan replied.
Tell me, if food were now before thee set,
Would'st thou not eat?—Thereafter as I like
The giver, answer'd Jesus—Why should that
Cause thy refusal? said the subtle Fiend.
Hast thou not right to all created things?
Owe not all creatures, by just right to thee
Duty and service, nor to stay till bid,
But tender all their power? Nor mention I
Meats by the law unclean, or offer'd first
To idols, those young Daniel could refuse;
Nor proffer'd by an enemy, though who
Would scruple that, with want oppress'd? Behold,
Nature asham'd, or, better to express,
Troubled, that thou shouldst hunger, hath purvey'd
From all the elements her choicest store,
To treat thee, as beseems, and as her Lord,
With honour: only deign to sit and eat.
He spake no dream; for, as his words had end,
Our Saviour lifting up his eyes beheld,
In ample space under the broadest shade,
A table richly spread, in regal mode,
With dishes pil'd, and meats of noblest sort

And savour; beasts of chase, or fowl of game,
In pastry built, or from the spit, or boil'd,
Gris-amber-steam'd; all fish, from sea or shore,
Freshet or purling brook, of shell or fin,
And exquisitest name, for which was drain'd
Pontus, and Lucrine bay, and Africk coast.
(Alas, how simple, to these cates compar'd,
Was that crude apple that diverted Eve!)
And at a stately side-board, by the wine
That fragrant smell diffus'd, in order stood
Tall stripling youths rich clad of fairer hue
Than Ganymed or Hylas; distant more
Under the trees now tripp'd, now solemn stood,
Nymphs of Diana's train, and Naiades
With fruits and flowers from Amalthea's horn,
And ladies of the Hesperides, that seem'd
Fairer than feign'd of old, or fabled since
Of faery damsels, met in forest wide
By knights of Logres, or of Lyones,
Lancelot, or Pelleas, or Pellenore,
And all the while harmonious airs were heard
Of chiming strings, or charming pipes; and winds
Of gentlest gale Arabian odours fann'd
From their soft wings, and Flora's earliest smells,
Such was the splendour; and the Tempter now
His invitation earnestly renew'd.

What doubts the Son of God to sit and eat?
These are not fruits forbidd'n; no interdict

Defends the touching of these viands pure;
Their taste no knowledge works, at least of evil,
But life preserves, destroys life's enemy,
Hunger with sweet restorative delight.
All these are Spirits of air, and woods, and springs,
Thy gentle ministers, who come to pay
Thee homage, and acknowledge thee their Lord:
What doubt'st thou, Son of God? Sit down and eat.
To whom thus Jesus temperately replied.
Said'st thou not that to all things I had right?
And who withholds my power that right to use?
Shall I receive by gift what of my own,
When and where likes me best, I can command?
I can at will, doubt not, as soon as thou,
Command a table in this wilderness,
And call swift flights of angels ministrant
Array'd in glory on my cup to attend:
Why should'st thou then obtrude this diligence,
In vain, where no acceptance it can find?
And with my hunger what hast thou to do?
Thy pompous delicacies I contemn,
And count thy specious gifts no gifts, but guiles.
To whom thus answer'd Satan malecontent.
That I have also power to give, thou seest;
If of that power I bring thee voluntary
What I might have bestow'd on whom I pleas'd,
And rather opportunely in this place
Chose to impart to thy apparent need,

Why should'st thou not accept it? but I see
What I can do or offer is suspect;
Of these things others quickly will dispose,
Whose pains have earn'd the far-fet spoil. With that
Both table and provision vanish'd quite
With sound of harpies' wings and talons heard:
Only the importune Tempter still remain'd,
And with these words his temptation pursued.
By hunger, that each other creature tames,
Thou art not to be harm'd, therefore not mov'd;
Thy temperance, invincible besides,
For no allurement yields to appetite;
And all thy heart is set on high designs,
High actions: but wherewith to be achiev'd?
Great acts require great means of enterprise;
Thou art unknown, unfriended, low of birth,
A carpenter thy father known, thyself
Bred up in poverty and straits at home,
Lost in a desert here and hunger-bit:
Which way, or from what hope, dost thou aspire
To greatness? whence authority deriv'st?
What followers, what retinue canst thou gain,
Or at thy heels the dizzy multitude,
Longer than thou canst feed them on thy cost?
Money brings honour, friends, conquest, and realms:
What rais'd Antipater the Edomite,
And his son Herod plac'd on Judah's throne,
Thy throne, but gold that got him puissant friends?

Therefore if at great things thou would'st arrive,
Get riches first, get wealth, and treasure heap,
Not difficult if thou hearken to me:
Riches are mine, fortune is in my hand;
They whom I favour thrive in wealth amain,
While virtue, valour, wisdom, sit in want.
To whom thus Jesus patiently replied,
Yet wealth, without these three, is impotent
To gain dominion, or to keep it gain'd.
Witness those ancient empires of the earth,
In highth of all their flowing wealth dissolv'd:
But men endued with these have oft attain'd
In lowest poverty to highest deeds;
Gideon, and Jeptha, and the shepherd lad,
Whose offspring on the throne of Judah sat
So many ages, and shall yet regain
That seat, and reign in Israel without end.
Among the Heathen, (for throughout the world
To me is not unknown what hath been done
Worthy of memorial,) canst thou not remember
Quintius, Fabricius, Curius, Regulus?
For I esteem these names of men so poor,
Who could do mighty things, and could contemn
Riches, though offer'd from the hand of kings.
And what in me seems wanting, but that I
May also in this poverty as soon
Accomplish what they did, perhaps and more?

Extol not riches then, the toil of fools,
The wise man's cumbrance, if not snare; more apt
To slacken virtue, and abate her edge
Than prompt her to do aught may merit praise.
What if with like aversion I reject
Riches and realms? yet not, for that a crown,
Golden in show, is but a wreath of thorns,
Brings dangers, troubles, cares, and sleepless nights,
To him who wears the regal diadem,
When on his shoulders each man's burden lies;
For therein stands the office of a king,
His honour, virtue, merit, and chief praise,
That for the publick all this weight he bears.
Yet he, who reigns within himself, and rules
Passions, desires, and fears, is more a king;
Which every wise and virtuous man attains;
And who attains not, ill aspires to rule
Cities of men, or headstrong multitudes,
Subject himself to anarchy within,
Or lawless passions in him, which he serves.
But to guide nations in the way of truth
By saving doctrine, and from errour lead
To know, and knowing worship God aright,
Is yet more kingly; this attracts the soul,
Governs the inner man, the nobler part;
That other o'er the body only reigns,
And oft by force, which, to a generous mind,

So reigning, can be no sincere delight.
Besides, to give a kingdom hath been thought
Greater and nobler done, and to lay down
Far more magnanimous, than to assume.
Riches are needless then, both for themselves,
And for thy reason why they should be sought,
To gain a scepter, oftest better miss'd.

END OF THE SECOND BOOK.

THE

THIRD BOOK

OF

PARADISE REGAINED.

THE ARGUMENT.

Satan, in a speech of much flattering commendation, endeavours to awaken in Jesus a passion for glory, by particularising various instances of conquests achieved, and great actions performed, by persons at an early period of life. Our Lord replies, by showing the vanity of worldly fame, and the improper means by which it is generally attained; and contrasts with it the true glory of religious patience and virtuous wisdom, as exemplified in the character of Job. Satan justifies the love of glory from the example of God himself, who requires it from all his creatures. Jesus detects the fallacy of this argument, by showing that, as goodness is the true ground on which glory is due to the great Creator of all things, sinful Man can have no right whatever to it.—Satan then urges our Lord respecting his claim to the throne of David; he tells him that the kingdom of Judea, being at that time a province of Rome, cannot be got possession of without much personal exertion on his part, and presses him to lose no time in beginning to reign. Jesus refers him to the time allotted for this, as for all other things; and, after intimating somewhat respecting his own previous sufferings, asks Satan, why he should be so solicitous for the exaltation of one, whose rising was destined to be his fall. Satan replies, that his own desperate state, by excluding all hope, leaves little room for fear: and that, as his own punishment was equally doomed, he is not interested in preventing the reign of one, from whose apparent benevolence he might rather hope for some interference in his favour.—Satan still pursues his former incitements; and, supposing that the seeming reluctance of Jesus to be thus advanced might arise from his being unacquainted with the world and its glories, conveys him to to the summit of a high mountain, and from thence shows him most of the kingdoms of Asia, particularly pointing out to his notice some extra-

ordinary military preparations of the Parthians to resist the incursions of the Scythians. He then informs our Lord, that he showed him this purposely that he might see how necessary military exertions are to retain the possession of kingdoms, as well as to subdue them at first, and advise him to consider how impossible it was to maintain Judea against two such powerful neighbours as the Romans and Parthians, and how necessary it would be to form an alliance with one or other of them. At the same time he recommends, and engages to secure to him, that of the Parathians; and tells him that by this means his power will be defended from any thing that Rome or Cæsar might attempt against it, and that he will be able to extend his glory wide, and especially to accomplish, what was particularly necessary to make the throne of Judea really the throne of David, the deliverance and restoration of the ten tribes, still in a state of captivity. Jesus, having briefly noticed the vanity of military efforts and the weakness of the arm of flesh, says, that when the time comes for ascending his allotted throne he shall not be slack; he remarks on Satan's extraordinary zeal for the deliverance of the Israelites, to whom he had always showed himself an enemy, and declares their servitude to be the consequence of their idolatry; but adds, that at a future time it may perhaps please God to recall them, and restore them to their liberty and native land.

PARADISE REGAINED.

BOOK III.

So SPAKE the Son of God; and Satan stood
A while, as mute, confounded what to say,
What to reply, confuted, and convinc'd
Of his weak arguing and fallacious drift;
At length, collecting all his serpent wiles,
With soothing words renew'd him thus accosts.
I see thou know'st what is of use to know,
What best to say canst say, to do canst do;
Thy actions to thy words accord, thy words
To thy large heart give utterance due, thy heart
Contains of good, wise, just, the perfect shape.
Should kings and nations from thy mouth consult,
Thy counsel would be as the oracle
Urim and Thummim, those oraculous gems

On Aaron's breast; or tongue of seers old
Infallible: Or wert thou sought to deeds
That might require the array of war, thy skill
Of conduct would be such, that all the world
Could not sustain thy prowess, or subsist
In battle, though against thy few in arms.
These God-like virtues wherefore dost thou hide,
Affecting private life, or more obscure
In savage wilderness? Wherefore deprive
All Earth her wonder at thy acts, thyself
The fame and glory; glory, the reward
That sole excites to high attempts, the flame
Of most erected spirits, most temper'd pure
Ethereal, who all pleasures else despise,
All treasures and all gain esteem as dross,
And dignities and powers all but the highest?
Thy years are ripe, and over-ripe; the son
Of Macedonian Philip had ere these
Won Asia, and the throne of Cyrus held
At his dispose; young Scipio had brought down
The Carthaginian pride; young Pompey quell'd
The Pontick king, and in triúmph had rode.
Yet years, and to ripe years judgment mature,
Quench not the thirst of glory, but augment.
Great Julius, whom now all the world admires,
The more he grew in years, the more inflam'd

With glory, wept that he had liv'd so long
Inglorious: But thou yet art not too late.
To whom our Saviour calmly thus replied.
Thou neither dost persuade me to seek wealth
For empire's sake, nor empire to affect
For glory's sake, by all thy argument.
For what is glory but the blaze of fame,
The people's praise, if always praise unmix'd?
And what the people but a herd confus'd,
A miscellaneous rabble who extol
Things vulgar, and, well weigh'd, scarce worth the praise?
They praise, and they admire, they know not what,
And know not whom, but as one leads the other;
And what delight to be by such extoll'd,
To live upon their tongues, and be their talk,
Of whom to be disprais'd were no small praise?
His lot who dares be singularly good.
The intelligent among them and the wise
Are few, and glory scarce of few is rais'd.
This is true glory and renown, when God
Looking on the earth, with approbation marks
The just man, and divulges him through Heaven
To all his Angels, who with true applause
Recount his praises: thus he did to Job,
When, to extend his fame through Heaven and Earth,
As thou to thy reproach may'st well remember,

He ask'd thee, "Hast thou seen my servant Job?"
Famous he was in Heaven, on Earth less known;
Where glory is false glory, attributed
To things not glorious, men not worthy of fame.
They err, who count it glorious to subdue
By conquest far and wide, to over-run
Large countries, and in field great battles win,
Great cities by assault: What do these worthies,
But rob and spoil, burn, slaughter, and enslave
Peaceable nations, neighbouring, or remote,
Made captive, yet deserving freedom more
Than those their conquerours, who leave behind
Nothing but ruin wheresoe'er they rove,
And all the flourishing works of peace destroy;
Then swell with pride, and must be titled Gods,
Great Benefactors of mankind, Deliverers,
Worshipt with temple, priest, and sacrifice?
One is the son of Jove, of Mars the other;
Till conquerour Death discover them scarce men,
Rolling in brutish vices, and deform'd,
Violent or shameful death their due reward.
But if there be in glory aught of good,
It may by means far different be attain'd,
Without ambition, war, or violence;
By deeds of peace, by wisdom eminent,
By patience, temperance: I mention still
Him, whom thy wrongs, with saintly patience borne,
Made famous in a land and times obscure;

Who names not now with honour patient Job?
Poor Socrates, (who next more memorable?)
By what he taught, and suffer'd for so doing,
For truth's sake suffering death, unjust, lives now
Equal in fame to proudest conquerours.
Yet if for fame and glory aught be done,
Aught suffer'd; if young African for fame
His wasted country freed from Punick rage;
The deed becomes unprais'd, the man at least,
And loses, though but verbal, his reward.
Shall I seek glory then, as vain men seek,
Oft not deserv'd? I seek not mine, but his
Who sent me; and thereby witness whence I am.
To whom the Tempter murmuring thus replied.
Think not to slight of glory; therein least
Resembling thy great Father: He seeks glory,
And for his glory all things made, all things
Orders and governs; nor content in Heaven
By all his Angels glorified, requires
Glory from men, from all men, good or bad,
Wise or unwise, no difference, no exemption;
Above all sacrifice, or hallow'd gift,
Glory he requires, and glory he receives,
Promiscuous from all nations, Jew or Greek,
Or barbarous, nor exception hath declar'd;
From us, his foes pronounc'd, glory he exacts.
To whom our Saviour fervently replied.
And reason; since his word all things produc'd,

Though chiefly not for glory as prime end,
But to show forth his goodness, and impart
His good communicable to every soul
Freely; of whom what could he less expect
Than glory and benediction, that is, thanks,
The slightest, easiest, readiest recompence
From them who could return him nothing else,
And, not returning that, would likeliest render
Contempt instead, dishonour, obloquy?
Hard recompence, unsuitable return
For so much good, so much beneficence!
But why should man seek glory, who of his own
Hath nothing, and to whom nothing belongs,
But condemnation ignominy and shame?
Who for so many benefits receiv'd,
Turn'd recreant to God, ingrate and false,
And so of all true good himself despoil'd;
Yet, sacrilegious, to himself would take
That which to God alone of right belongs:
Yet so much bounty is in God, such grace,
That who advance his glory, not their own,
Them he himself to glory will advance.
So spake the Son of God; and here again
Satan had not to answer, but stood struck
With guilt of his own sin; for he himself,
Insatiable of glory, had lost all;
Yet of another plea bethought him soon.
Of glory, as thou wilt, said he, so deem;

Worth or not worth the seeking, let, it pass.
But to a kingdom thou art born, ordain'd
To sit upon thy father David's throne,
By mother's side thy father; though thy right
Be now in powerful hands, that will not part
Easily from possession won with arms:
Judæa now and all the Promis'd Land,
Reduc'd a province under Roman yoke,
Obeys Tiberius; nor is always rul'd
With temperate sway; oft have they violated
The temple, oft the law, with foul affronts,
Abominations rather, as did once
Antiochus: And think'st thou to regain
Thy right, by sitting still, or thus retiring?
So did not Maccabeus: he indeed
Retir'd unto the desart, but with arms;
And o'er a mighty king so oft prevail'd,
That by strong hand his family obtain'd,
Though priests, the crown, and David's throne usurp'd,
With Modin and her suburbs once content.
If kingdom move thee not, let move thee zeal
And duty; zeal and duty are not slow,
But on occasion's forelock watchful wait:
They themselves rather are occasion best;
Zeal of thy father's house, duty to free
Thy country from her Heathen servitude.
So shalt thou best fulfil, best verify

The Prophets old, who sung thy endless reign;
The happier reign, the sooner it begins:
Reign then; what canst thou better do the while?
To whom our Saviour answer thus return'd.
All things are best fulfill'd in their due time;
And time there is for all things, Truth hath said.
If of my reign prophetick Writ hath told,
That it shall never end, so, when begin,
The Father in his purpose hath decreed;
He, in whose hand all times and seasons roll.
What if he hath decreed that I shall first
Be tried in humble state, and things adverse,
By tribulations, injuries, insults,
Contempts, and scorns, and snares, and violence,
Suffering, abstaining, quietly expecting,
Without distrust or doubt, that he may know
What I can suffer, how obey? Who best
Can suffer, best can do; best reign, who first
Well hath obey'd; just trial, ere I merit
My exaltation without change or end.
But what concerns it thee, when I begin
My everlasting kingdom? Why art thou
Solicitous? What moves thy inquisition?
Know'st thou not that my rising is thy fall,
And my promotion will be thy destruction?
To whom the Tempter, inly rack'd, replied.
Let that come when it comes; all hope is lost
Of my reception into grace: what worse?
For where no hope is left, is left no fear;

If there be worse, the expectation more
Of worse torments me than the feeling can,
I would be at the worst: worst is my port,
My harbour, and my ultimate repose;
The end I would attain, my final good.
My errour was my errour, and my crime
My crime; whatever, for itself condemn'd;
And will alike be punish'd, whether thou
Reign, or reign not; though to that gentle brow
Willingly could I fly, and hope thy reign,
From that placid aspect and meek regard,
Rather than aggravate my evil state,
Would stand between me and thy Father's ire,
(Whose ire I dread more than the fire of Hell,)
A shelter, and a kind of shading cool
Interposition, as a summer's cloud.
If I then to the worst that can be haste,
Why move thy feet so slow to what is best,
Happiest, both to thyself and all the world,
That thou, who worthiest art, should'st be their
king?
Perhaps thou linger'st, in deep thoughts detain'd
Of the enterprise so hazardous and high;
No wonder; for, though in thee be united
What of perfection can in man be found,
Or human nature can receive, consider,
Thy life hath yet been private, most part spent
At home, scarce view'd the Galilean towns,

And once a year Jerusalem, few days'
Short sojourn; and what thence could'st thou observe?
The world thou hast not seen, much less her glory,
Empires, and monarchs, and their radiant courts,
Best school of best experience, quickest insight
In all things that to greatest actions lead.
The wisest, unexperienc'd, will be ever
Timorous and loth, with novice modesty,
(As he who, seeking asses, found a kingdom,)
Irresolute, unhardy, unadventurous:
But I will bring thee where thou soon shalt quit
Those rudiments, and see before thine eyes
The monarchies of the earth, their pomp and state;
Sufficient introduction to inform
Thee, of thyself so apt, in regal arts,
And regal mysteries; that thou may'st know
How best their opposition to withstand.
With that, (such power was given him then,) he took
The Son of God up to a mountain high.
It was a mountain at whose verdant feet
A spacious plain, outstretch'd in circuit wide,
Lay pleasant; from his side two rivers flow'd,
The one winding, the other straight, and left between
Fair champain with less rivers intervein'd,
Then meeting join'd their tribute to the sea:

Fertile of corn the glebe, of oil and wine;
With herds the pastures throng'd, with flocks the hills;
Huge cities and high-tower'd, that well might seem
The seats of mightiest monarchs; and so large
The prospect was, that here and there was room
For barren desart, fountainless and dry.
To this high mountain top the Tempter brought
Our Saviour, and new train of words began.
Well have we speeded, and o'er hill and dale,
Forest and field and flood, temples and towers,
Cut shorter many a league; here thou behold'st
Assyria, and her empire's ancient bounds,
Araxes and the Caspian lake; thence on
As far as Indus east, Euphrates west,
And oft beyond: to south the Persian bay,
And, inaccessible, the Arabian drouth:
Here Nineveh, of length within his wall
Several days journey, built by Ninus old,
Of that first golden monarchy the seat,
And seat of Salmanassar, whose success
Israel in long captivity still mourns;
There Babylon, the wonder of all tongues,
As ancient, but rebuilt by him who twice
Judah and all thy father David's house
Led captive, and Jerusalem laid waste,
Till Cyrus set them free; Persepolis,
His city, there thou seest, and Bactra there;

Ecbatana her structure vast there shows,
And Hecatompylos her hundred gates;
There Susa by Choaspes, amber stream,
The drink of none but kings; of later fame,
Built by Emathian or by Parthian hands,
The great Seleucia, Nisibis, and there
Artaxata, Teredon, Ctesiphon,
Turning with easy eye, thou may'st behold.
All these the Parthian, (now some ages past,
By great Arsaces led, who founded first
That empire,) under his dominion holds,
From the luxurious kings of Antioch won.
And just in time thou com'st to have a view
Of his great power; for now the Parthian king
In Ctesiphon hath gather'd all his host
Against the Scythian, whose incursions wild
Have wasted Sogdiana; to her aid
He marches now in haste; see, though from far,
His thousands, in what martial equipage
They issue forth, steel bows and shafts their arms,
Of equal dread in flight, or in pursuit;
All horsemen, in which fight they most excel;
See how in warlike muster they appear,
In rhombs, and wedges, and half-moons, and wings.
He look'd, and saw what numbers numberless
The city gates out-pour'd, light-armed troops,
In coats of mail and military pride;
In mail their horses clad, yet fleet and strong,

Prauncing their riders bore, the flower and choice
Of many provinces from bound to bound;
From Arachosia, from Candaor east,
And Margiana to the Hyrcanian cliffs
Of Caucasus, and dark Iberian dales;
From Atropatia and the neighbouring plains
Of Adiabene, Media, and the south,
Of Susiana, to Balsara's haven.
He saw them in their forms of battle rang'd,
How quick they wheel'd, and flying behind them shot
Sharp sleet of arrowy showers against the face
Of their pursuers, and overcame by flight;
The field all iron cast a gleaming brown:
Nor wanted clouds of foot, nor on each horn
Cuirassiers all in steel for standing fight,
Chariots, or elephants indors'd with towers
Of archers; nor of labouring pioneers
A multitude, with spades and axes arm'd
To lay hills plain, fell woods, or valleys fill,
Or where plain was raise hill, or overlay
With bridges rivers proud, as with a yoke;
Mules after these, camels and dromedaries,
And waggons, fraught with utensils of war.
Such forces met not, nor so wide a camp,
When Agrican with all his northern powers
Besieg'd Albracca, as romances tell,
The city of Gallaphrone, from whence to win

The fairest of her sex Angelica,
His daughter, sought by many prowest knights,
Both Paynim, and the peers of Charlemain.
Such and so numerous was their chivalry:
At sight whereof the Fiend yet more presum'd,
And to our Saviour thus his words renew'd.
That thou may'st know I seek not to engage
Thy virtue, and not every way secure
On no slight grounds thy safety; hear, and mark,
To what end I have brought thee hither, and shown
All this fair sight: Thy kingdom, though foretold
By Prophet or by Angel, unless thou
Endeavour, as thy father David did,
Thou never shalt obtain; prediction still
In all things, and all men, supposes means;
Without means used, what it predicts revokes.
But, say thou wert possess'd of David's throne,
By free consent of all, none opposite,
Samaritan or Jew; how could'st hope
Long to enjoy it, quiet and secure,
Between two such enclosing enemies,
Roman and Parthian? Therefore one of these
Thou must make sure thy own; the Parthian first
By my advice, as nearer, and of late
Found able by invasion to annoy
Thy country, and captive lead away her kings,
Antigonus and old Hyrcanus, bound,
Maugre the Roman: It shall be my task

To render thee the Parthian at dispose,
Choose which thou wilt, by conquest or by league:
By him thou shalt regain, without him not,
That which alone can truly re-install thee
In David's royal seat, his true successour,
Deliverance of thy brethren, those ten tribes,
Whose offspring in his territory yet serve,
In Habor, and amongst the Medes dispers'd:
Ten sons of Jacob, two of Joseph, lost
Thus long from Israel, serving, as of old
Their fathers in the land of Egypt serv'd,
This offer sets before thee to deliver.
These if from servitude thou shalt restore
To their inheritance, then, nor till then,
Thou on the throne of David in full glory,
From Egypt to Euphrates, and beyond,
Shalt reign, and Rome or Cæsar not need fear.
To whom our Saviour answer'd thus, unmov'd.
Much ostentation vain of fleshly arm
And fragile arms, much instrument of war,
Long in preparing, soon to nothing brought,
Before mine eyes thou hast set; and in my ear
Vented much policy, and projects deep
Of enemies, of aids, battles and leagues,
Plausible to the world, to me worth nought.
Means I must use, thou say'st, prediction else
Will unpredict, and fail me of the throne:
My time, I told thee, (and that time for thee

Were better farthest off,) is not yet come:
When that comes, think not thou to find me slack
On my part aught endeavouring, or to need
Thy politick maxims, or that cumbersome
Luggage of war there shown me, argument
Of human weakness rather than of strength.
My brethren, as thou call'st them, those ten tribes
I must deliver, if I mean to reign
David's true heir, and his full scepter sway
To just extent over all Israel's sons.
But whence to thee this zeal? Where was it then
For Israel, or for David, or his throne,
When thou stood'st up his tempter to the pride
Of numbering Israël, which cost the lives
Of threescore and ten thousand Israelites
By three days pestilence? Such was thy zeal
To Israel then; the same that now to me!
As for those captive tribes, themselves were they
Who wrought their own captivity, fell off
From God to worship calves, the deities
Of Egypt, Baal next and Ashtaroth,
And all the idolatries of Heathen round,
Besides their other worse than heathenish crimes;
Nor in the land of their captivity
Humbled themselves, or penitent besought
The God of their forefathers; but so died
Impenitent, and left a race behind
Like to themselves, distinguishable scarce

From Gentiles, but by circumcision vain;
And God with idols in their worship join'd.
Should I of these the liberty regard,
Who, freed, as to their ancient patrimony,
Unhumbled, unrepentant, unreform'd,
Headlong would follow; and to their Gods perhaps
Of Bethel and of Dan? No; let them serve
Their enemies, who serve idols with God.
Yet he at length, (time to himself best known,)
Remembering Abraham, by some wonderous call
May bring them back, repentant and sincere,
And at their passing cleave the Assyrian flood,
While to their native land with joy they haste;
As the Red Sea and Jordan once he cleft,
When to the Promis'd Land their fathers pass'd:
To his due time and providence I leave them.
So spake Israel's true king, and to the Fiend
Made answer meet, that made void all his wiles.
So fares it, when with truth falshood contends.

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END OF THE THIRD BOOK.

THE

FOURTH BOOK

OF

PARADISE REGAINED.

THE ARGUMENT.

Satan persisting in the temptation of our Lord, shows him Imperial Rome in its greatest pomp and splendour, as a power which he probably would prefer before that of the Parthians; and tells him that he might with the greatest ease expel Tiberius, restore the Romans to their liberty, and make himself master not only of the Roman Empire, but by so doing of the whole world, and inclusively of the throne of David. Our Lord in reply expresses his contempt of grandeur and worldly power, notices the luxury, vanity, and profligacy of the Romans, declaring how little they merited to be restored to that liberty, which they had lost by their misconduct, and briefly refers to the greatness of his own future kingdom. Satan, now desperate, to enhance the value of his proffered gifts, professes that the only terms, on which he will bestow them, are our Saviour's falling down and worshipping him. Our Lord expresses a firm but temperate indignation at such a proposition, and rebukes the Tempter by the title of "Satan for ever damned." Satan, abashed, attempts to justify himself: he then assumes a new ground of temptation, and, proposing to Jesus the intellectual gratifications of wisdom and knowledge, points out to him the celebrated seat of ancient learning, Athens, its schools, and other various resorts of learned teachers and their disciples; accompanying the view with a highly-finished panegyrick on the Grecian musicians, poets, orators, and philosophers of the different sects. Jesus replies, by showing the vanity and insufficiency of the boasted Heathen philosophy; and preferes to the musick, poetry, eloquenee, and didactick policy of the Greeks, those of the inspired Hebrew writers. Satan irritated at the failure of all his attempts, upbraids the indiscretion of our Saviour in rejecting his offers;

and, having, in ridicule of his expected kingdom, foretold the sufferings that our Lord was to undergo, carries him back into the wilderness, and leaves him there. Night comes on: Satan raises a tremendous storm, and attempts further to alarm Jesus with frightful dreams, and terrifick threatening spectres; which however have no effect upon him. A calm, bright, beautiful morning succeeds to the horrours of the night. Satan again presents himself to our blessed Lord, and, from noticing the storm of the preceding night as pointed chiefly at him, takes occasion once more to insult him with an account of the sufferings which he was certainly to undergo. This only draws from our Lord a brief rebuke. Satan, now at the height of his desperation, confesses that he had frequently watched Jesus from his birth, purposely to discover if he was the true Messiah; and, collecting from what passed at the river Jordan that he most probably was so, he had from that time more assiduously followed him, in hopes of gaining some advantage over him, which would most effectually prove that he was not really that Divine Person destined to be his "fatal Enemy." In this he acknowledges that he has hitherto completely failed; but still determines to make one more trial of him. Accordingly he conveys him to the Temple at Jerusalem, and, placing him on a pointed eminence, requires him to prove his Divinity either by standing there, or casting himself down with safety. Our Lord reproves the Tempter, and at the same time manifests his own Divinity by standing on this dangerous point. Satan, amazed and terrified, instantly falls; and repairs to his Infernal Compeers, to relate the bad success of his enterprise. Angels in the mean time convey our blessed Lord to a beautiful valley, and, while they minister to him a repast of celestial food, celebrate his victory in a triumphal hymn.

PARADISE REGAINED.

BOOK IV.

Perplex'd and troubled at his bad success
The Tempter stood, nor had what to reply,
Discover'd in his fraud, thrown from his hope
So oft, and the persuasive rhetorick
That sleek'd his tongue, and won so much on Eve,
So little here, nay lost: but Eve was Eve;
This far his over-match, who, self-deceiv'd
And rash, before-hand had no better weigh'd
The strength he was to cope with, or his own:
But as a man, who had been matchless held
In cunning, over-reach'd where least he thought,
To salve his credit, and for very spite,
Still will be tempting him who foils him still,
And never cease, though to his shame the more;

Or as a swarm of flies in vintage time,
About the wine-press where sweet must is pour'd
Beat off, returns as oft with humming sound;
Or surging waves against a solid rock,
Though all to shivers dash'd, the assault renew,
(Vain battery!) and in froth or bubbles end;
So Satan, whom repulse upon repulse
Met ever, and to shameful silence brought,
Yet gives not o'er, though desperate of success,
And his vain importunity pursues.
He brought our Saviour to the western side
Of that high mountain, whence he might behold
Another plain, long, but in breadth not wide,
Wash'd by the southern sea, and on the north,
To equal length back'd with a ridge of hills
That screen'd the fruits of the earth, and seats of men,
From cold Septentrion blasts; thence in the midst
Divided by a river, of whose banks
On each side an imperial city stood,
With towers and temples proudly elevate
On seven small hills, with palaces adorn'd
Porches, and theatres, baths, aqueducts,
Statues, and trophies, and triumphal arcs,
Gardens, and groves, presented to his eyes,
Above the highth of mountains interpos'd:
(By what strange parallax, or optick skill
Of vision, multiplied through air, or glass
Of telescope, were curious to inquire:)

And now the Tempter thus his silence broke.
The city, which thou seest, no other deem
Than great and glorious Rome, queen of the earth,
So far renown'd, and with the spoils enrich'd
Of nations; there the Capitol thou seest,
Above the rest lifting his stately head
On the Tarpeian rock, her citadel
Impregnable; and there mount Palatine,
The imperial palace, compass huge, and high
The structure, skill of noblest architects,
With gilded battlements conspicuous far,
Turrets, and terraces, and glittering spires:
Many a fair edifice besides, more like
Houses of Gods, (so well I have dispos'd
My aery microscope,) thou may'st behold,
Outside and inside both, pillars and roofs,
Carv'd work, the hand of fam'd artificers,
In ceder, marble, ivory, or gold.
Thence to the gates cast round thine eye, and see,
What conflux issuing forth or entering in;
Prætors, proconsuls to their provinces
Hasting, or on return, in robes of state,
Lictors and rods, the ensigns of their power,
Legions and cohorts, turms of horse and wings:
Or embassies from regions far remote,
In various habits, on the Appian road,
Or on the Emilian; some from farthest south,
Syene, and where the shadow both way falls,

Meroe, Nilotick isle; and, more to west,
The realm of Bocchus to the Black-moor sea;
From the Asian kings, and Parthian among these;
From India and the golden Chersonese,
And utmost Indian isle Taprobane,
Dusk faces with white silken turbans wreath'd;
From Gillia, Gades, and the British west;
Germans, and Scythians, and Sarmatians, north
Beyond Danubius to the Taurick pool.
All nations now to Rome obedience pay:
To Rome's great emperour, whose wide domain,
In ample territory, wealth, and power,
Civility of manners, arts and arms,
And long renown, thou justly mayst prefer
Before the Parthian. These two thrones except,
The rest are barbarous, and scarce worth the sight,
Shar'd among petty kings too far remov'd;
These having shown thee, I have shown thee all
The kingdoms of the world, and all their glory.
This emperour hath no son, and now is old,
Old and lascivious, and from Rome retir'd
To Capreæ, an island small, but strong,
On the Campanian shore, with purpose there
His horrid lusts in private to enjoy;
Committing to a wicked favourite
All publick cares, and yet of him suspicious;
Hated to all, and hating. With what ease,
Endued with regal virtues, as thou art,

Appearing, and beginning noble deeds,
Might'st thou expel this monster from his throne,
Now made a stye; and, in his place ascending,
A victor people free from servile yoke!
And with my help thou may'st; to me the power
Is given, and by that right I give it thee.
Aim therefore at no less than all the world;
Aim at the highest: without the highest attain'd,
Will be for thee no sitting, or not long,
On David's throne, be prophesied what will.
To whom the Son of God, unmov'd replied.
Nor doth this grandeur and majestick show
Of luxury, though call'd magnificence,
More than of arms before, allure mine eye,
Much less my mind; though thou should'st add to tell
Their sumptuous gluttonies, and gorgeous feasts
On citron tables or Atlantick stone,
(For I have also heard, perhaps have read,)
Their wines of Setia, Cales, and Falerne,
Chios, and Crete, and how they quaff in gold,
Crystal, and myrrhine cups, emboss'd with gems
And studs of pearl; to me should'st tell, who thirst
And hunger still. Them embassies thou show'st
From nations far and nigh: what honour that,
But tedious waste of time, to sit and hear
So many hallow compliments and lies,
Outlandish flatteries? Then proceed'st to talk
Of the emperour, how easily subdued,

How gloriously: I shall, thou say'st, expel
A brutish monster; what if I withal
Expel a Devil who first made him such;
Let his tormenter concience find him out;
For him I was not sent; nor yet to free
That people, victor once, now vile and base;
Deservedly made vassal; who, once just,
Frugal, and mild, and temperate, conquer'd well,
But govern ill the nations under yoke,
Peeling their provinces, exhausted all
By lust and rapine; first ambitious grown
Of triumph, that insulting vanity;
Then cruel, by their sports to blood inur'd
Of fighting beasts, and men to beasts expos'd:
Luxurious by their wealth, and greedier still,
And from the daily scene effeminate.
What wise and valiant man would seek to free
These, thus degenerate, by themselves enslav'd?
Or could of inward slaves make outward free?
Know therefore, when my season comes to sit
On David's throne, it shall be like a tree
Spreading and overshadowing all the earth;
Or as a stone, that shall to pieces dash
All monarchies besides throughout the world;
And of my kingdom there shall be no end:
Means there shall be to this; but what the means,
Is not for thee to know, nor me to tell.
To whom the Tempter, impudent, replied,

I see all offers made by me how slight
Thou valuest, because offer'd, and reject'st:
Nothing will please the difficult and nice,
Or nothing more than still to contradict:
On the other side know also thou, that I
On what I offer set as high esteem,
Nor what I part with mean to give for nought;
All these, which in a moment thou behold'st,
The kingdoms of the world, to thee I give,
(For, given to me, I give to whom I please,)
No trifle; yet with this reserve, not else,
On this condition, if thou wilt fall down,
And worship me as thy superior lord,
(Easily done,) and hold them all of me;
For what can less so great a gift deserve?
Whom thus our Saviour answer'd with disdain.
I never lik'd thy talk, thy offers less;
Now both abhor, since thou hast dar'd to utter
The abominable terms, impious condition:
But I endure the time, till which expir'd
Thou hast permission on me. It is written,
The first of all commandments, Thou shalt worship
The Lord thy God, and only him shalt serve;
And dar'st thou to the Son of God propound
To worship thee accurs'd? now more accurs'd
For this attempt, bolder than on Eve,
And more blasphémous; which expect to rue.
The kingdoms of the world to thee were given?

Permitted rather, and by thee usurp'd;
Other donation none thou canst produce.
If given, by whom but by the King of Kings,
God over all supreme? If given to thee,
By thee how fairly is the giver now
Repaid! But gratitude in thee is lost
Long since. Wert thou so void of fear or shame,
As offer them to me, the Son of God?
To me my own, on such abhorred pact,
That I fall down and worship thee as God?
Get thee behind me; plain thou now appear'st
That Evil-one, Satan for ever damn'd.

To whom the Fiend, with fear abash'd, replied.

Be not so sore offended, Son of God,
Though Sons of God both Angels are and Men,
If I, to try whether in higher sort
Than these thou bear'st that title, have propos'd
What both from Men and Angels I receive,
Tetrarchs of fire, air, flood, and on the earth,
Nations beside from all the quater'd winds,
God of this world invok'd, and world beneath:
Who then thou art, whose coming is foretold
To me most fatal, me it most concerns;
The trial hath indamag'd thee no way,
Rather more honour left and more esteem;
Me nought advantag'd, missing what I aim'd.
Therefore let pass, as they are transitory,

The kingdoms of this world; addicted more
To contemplation and profound dispute,
As by that early action may be judg'd,
When, slipping from thy mother's eye, thou went'st
Alone into the temple, there wast found
Among the gravest Rabbies, disputant
On points and questions fitting Moses' chair,
Teaching, not taught. The childhood shows the man,
As morning shows the day: be famous then
By wisdom; as thy empire must extend,
So let extend thy mind o'er all the world
In knowledge, all things in it comprehend.
All knowledge is not couch'd in Moses' law,
The Pentateuch, or what the Prophets wrote;
The Gentiles also know, and write, and teach
To admiration, led by Nature's light,
And with the Gentiles much thou must converse,
Ruling them by persuasion, as thou mean'st;
Without their learning, how wilt thou with them,
Or they with thee, hold conversation meet?
How wilt thou reason with them, how refute
Their idolisms, traditions, paradoxes?
Errour by his own arms is best evinc'd.
Look once more, ere we leave this specular mount
Westward, much nearer by southwest, behold;
Where on the Ægean shore a city stands,
Built nobly, pure the air, and light the soil;

Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of arts
And eloquence, native to famous wits
Or hospitable, in her sweet recess,
City or suburban, studious walks and shades.
See there the olive grove of Academe,
Plato's retirement, where the Attick bird
Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long;
There flowery hill Hymettus, with the sound
Of bees' industrious murmur, oft invites
To studious musing; there Ilissus rolls
His whispering stream: within the walls, then view
The schools of ancient sages; his, who bred
Great Alexander to subdue the world,
Lyceum there, and painted Stoa next:
There shalt thou hear and learn the secret power
Of harmony, in tones and numbers hit
By voice or hand; and various-measur'd verse,
Æolian charms and Dorian lyrick odes,
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In brief sententious precepts, while they treat
Of fate, and chance, and change in human life,
High actions and high passions best describing:
Thence to the famous orators repair,

Those ancient, whose resistless eloquence
Wielded at will that fierce democratic,
Shook the arsenal, and fulmin'd over Greece
To Macedon and Artaxerxes' throne:
To sage Philosophy next lend thine ear,
From Heaven descended to the low-roof'd house
Of Socrates; see there his tenement,
Whom well inspir'd the oracle pronounc'd
Wisest of men; from whose mouth issued forth
Mellifluous streams, that water'd all the schools
Of Academicks old and new, with those
Surnam'd Peripateticks, and the sect
Epicurean and the Stoick severe;
These here revolve, or, as thou lik'st, at home,
Till time mature thee to a kingdom's weight;
These rules will render thee a king complete
Within thyself, much more with empire join'd.
To whom our Saviour sagely thus replied.
Think not but that I know these things, or think
I know them not; not therefore am I short
Of knowing what I ought: he who receives
Light from above, from the fountain of light,
No other doctrine needs, though granted true;
But these are false, or little else but dreams,
Conjectures, fancies, built on nothing firm.
The first and wisest of them all profess'd
To know this only, that he nothing knew;
The next to fabling fell, and smooth conceits;

A third sort doubted all things, though plain sense;
Others in virtue plac'd felicity,
But virtue join'd with riches and long life;
In corporal pleasure he, and careless ease;
The Stoick last in philosophick pride,
By him call'd virtue; and his virtuous man,
Wise, perfect in himself, and all possessing
Equal to God, oft shames not to prefer,
As fearing God nor man, contemning all
Wealth, pleasure, pain or torment, death and life,
Which, when he lists, he leaves, or boasts he can,
For all his tedious talk is but vain boast,
Or subtle shifts conviction to evade.
Alas! what can they teach, and not mislead,
Ignorant of themselves, of God much more,
And how the world began, and how man fell
Degraded by himself, on grace depending;
Much of the soul they talk, but all awry,
And in themselves seek virtue, and to themselves
All glory arrogate, to God give none;
Rather accuse him under usual names,
Fortune and Fate, as one regardless quite
Of mortal things. Who therefore seeks in these
True wisdom, finds her not; or by delusion,
Far worse, her false resemblance only meets,
An empty cloud. However, many books,
Wise men have said, are wearisome; who reads
Incessantly, and to his reading brings not

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On man, beast, plant, wasteful and turbulent,
Like turbulencies in the affairs of men,
Over whose heads they roar, and seem to point,
They oft fore-signify and threaten ill:
This tempest at this desart most was bent;
Of men at thee, for only thou here dwell'st.
Did I not tell thee, if thou didst reject
The perfect season offer'd with my aid
To win thy destin'd seat, but wilt prolong
All to the push of fate, pursue thy way
Of gaining David's throne, no man knows when,
For both the when and how is no where told?
Thou shalt be what thou art ordain'd, no doubt;
For angels have proclaim'd it, concealing
The time and means. Each act is rightliest done,
Not when it must, but when it may be best:
If thou observe not this, be sure to find,
What I foretold thee, many a hard assay
Of dangers, and adversities, and pains,
Ere thou of Israel's scepter get fast hold;
Whereof this ominous night, that clos'd thee round,
So many terrours, voices, prodigies,
May warn thee, as a sure fore-going sign.
So talk'd he, while the Son of God went on
And staid not, but in brief him answer'd thus.
Me worse than wet thou find'st not; other harm
Those terrours, which thou speak'st of did me none;
I never fear'd they could, though noising loud

And threatening high: what they can do, as signs
Betokening, or ill boding, I contemn
As false portents, not sent from God, but thee;
Who, knowing, I shall reign past thy preventing,
Obtrud'st thy offer'd aid, that I, accepting,
At least might seem to hold all power of thee,
Ambitious Spirit! and wouldst be thought my God;
And storm'st refus'd, thinking to terrify
Me to thy will! desist, (thou art discern'd,
And toil'st in vain,) nor me in vain molest.

To whom the Fiend, now swoln with rage, replied.

Then hear, O Son of David, Virgin-born,
For Son of God to me is yet in doubt;
Of the Messiah I had heard foretold
By all the Prophets; of thy birth at length,
Announc'd by Gabriel, with the first I knew,
And of the angelic song in Bethlehem field,
On thy birth-night that sung thee Saviour born.
From that time seldom have I ceas'd to eye
Thy infancy, thy childhood, and thy youth,
Thy manhood last though yet in private bred;
Till at the ford of Jordan, whither all
Flock to the Baptist, I among the rest,
(Though not to be baptiz'd,) by voice from Heaven
Heard thee pronounc'd the Son of God belov'd.
Thenceforth I thought thee worth my nearer view
And narrower scrutiny, that I might learn

In what degree or meaning thou art call'd
The Son of God; which bears no single sense.
The Son of God I also am, or was;
And if I was, I am; relation stands;
All men are Sons of God; yet thee I thought
In some respect far higher so declar'd:
Therefore I watch'd thy footsteps from that hour,
And follow'd thee still on to this waste wild;
Where, by all best conjectures, I collect
Thou art to be my fatal enemy:
Good reason then, if I before hand seek
To understand my adversary, who
And what he is; his wisdom, power, intent;
By parl or composition, truce or league,
To win him, or win from him what I can:
And opportunity I here have had
To try thee, sift thee, and confess have found thee
Proof against all temptation, as a rock
Of adamant, and, as a center, firm;
To the utmost of mere Man both wise and good,
Not more; for honours, riches, kingdoms, glory,
Have been before contemn'd, and may again.
Therefore, to know what more thou art than Man,
Worth naming Son of God by voice from Heaven,
Another method I must now begin.

So saying he caught him up, and, without wing
Of hippogrif, bore through the air sublime,
Over the wilderness and o'er the plain,

Till underneath them fair Jerusalem,
The holy city, lifted high her towers,
And higher yet the glorious temple rear'd.
Her pile, far off appearing like a mount
Of alabaster, topt with golden spires:
There, on the highest pinnacle, he set
The Son of God; and added thus in scorn.
There stand, if thou wilt stand; to stand upright
Will ask thee skill; I to thy Father's house
Have brought thee, and highest plac'd, highest is best:
Now show thy progeny; if not to stand,
Cast thyself down; safely, if Son of God:
For it is written, "He will give command
Concerning thee to his Angels, in their hands
They shall up lift thee, lest at any time
Thou chance to dash thy foot against a stone."
To whom thus Jesus: Also it is written,
"Tempt not the Lord thy God." He said and stood:
But Satan, smitten with amazement fell.
As when Earth's son Antæus, (to compare
Small things with greatest, in Irassa strove
With Jove's Alcides, and, oft foil'd still rose,
Receiving from his mother Earth new strength,
Fresh from his fall, and fiercer grapple join'd,
Throttled at length in the air, expir'd and fell;
So, after many a foil, the Tempter proud,

Renewing fresh assaults, amidst his pride,
Fell whence he stood to see his victor fall:
And as that Theban monster, that propos'd
Her riddle, and him who solv'd it not devour'd,
That once found out and solv'd, for grief and spite
Cast herself headlong from the Ismenian steep;
So, struck with dread and anguish, fell the Fiend,
And to his crew, that sat consulting, brought
(Joyless triumphals of his hop'd success,)
Ruin, and desperation, and dismay,
Who durst so proudly tempt the Son of God.
So Satan fell; and straight a fiery globe
Of Angels on full sail of wing flew nigh,
Who on their plumy vans receiv'd him soft
From his uneasy station, and upbore,
As on a floating couch, through the blithe air;
Then, in a flowery valley, set him down
On a green bank, and set before him spread
A table of celestial food, divine
Ambrosial fruits, fetch'd from the tree of life,
And, from the fount of life, ambrosial drink,
That soon refresh'd him wearied, and repair'd,
What hunger, if aught hunger, had impair'd
Or thirst; and, as he fed, angelick quires
Sung heavenly anthems of his victory
Over Temptation and the Tempter proud.

True image of the Father; whether thron'd
In the bosom of bliss, and light of light

Conceiving, or, remote from Heaven, enshrin'd
In fleshy tabernacle, and human form,
Wandering the wilderness; whatever place,
Habit, or state, or motion, still expressing
The Son of God, with God-like force endued
Against the attempter of thy Father's throne,
And thief of Paradise! Him long of old
Thou didst debel, and down from Heaven cast
With all his army; now thou hast aveng'd
Supplanted Adam, and, by vanquishing
Temptation, hast regain'd lost Paradise,
And frustrated the conquest fraudulent.
He never more henceforth will dare set foot
In Paradise to tempt; his snares are broke:
For, though that seat of earthly bliss be fail'd,
A fairer Paradise is founded now
For Adam and his chosen sons, whom thou,
A Saviour, art come down to re-install,
Where they shall dwell secure, when time shall be
Of Tempter and Temptation without fear.
But thou, infernal Serpent! shalt not long
Rule in the clouds; like an autumnal star,
Or lightning, thou shalt fall from Heaven, trod down
Under his feet: for proof, ere this thou feel'st
Thy wound, (yet not thy last and deadliest wound,)
By this repulse receiv'd, and hold'st in Hell
No triumph: in all her gates Abaddon rues
Thy bold attempt. Hereafter learn with awe
To dread the Son of God: He, all unarm'd,

Shall chase thee, with the terrour of his voice,
From thy demoniack holds, possession foul,
Thee and thy legions; yelling they shall fly,
And beg to hide them in a herd of swine,
Lest he command them down into the deep,
Bound, and to torment sent before their time.—
Hail, Son of the Most High, heir of both worlds,
Queller of Satan! On thy glorious work
Now enter; and begin to save mankind.
Thus they the Son of God, our Saviour meek,
Sung victor, and from heavenly feast refresh'd,
Brought on his way with joy; he, unobserv'd,
Home to his mother's house private return'd.

THE END OF PARADISE REGAINED.

SAMSON AGONISTES:

A

DRAMATICK POEM,

Τραγῳδια μιμησις πραξεως σπουδαιας, &c.

Aristot. Poet Cap. 6.

Tragœdia est imitatio actionis seriæ, &c. per misericordiam et metum perficiens talium affectuum lustrationem.

SAMSON AGONISTES.

Of that sort of Dramatick Poem which is called Tragedy.

TRAGEDY, as it was anciently composed, hath been ever held the gravest, moralest, and most profitable of all other poems: therefore said by Aristotle to be of power by raising pity and fear, or terrour, to purge the mind of those and such like passions, that is, to temper and reduce them to just measure with a kind of delight, stirred up by reading or seeing those passions well imitated. Nor is Nature wanting in her own effects to make good his assertion: for so, in physick, things of melancholick hue and quality are used against melancholy, sour against sour, salt to remove salt humours. Hence philosophers and other gravest writers, as Cicero, Plutarch,

and others, frequently cite out of tragick poets, both to adorn and illustrate their discourse. The Apostle Paul himself thought it not unworthy to insert a verse of Euripides into the text of Holy Scriptnre, 1 *Cor*, xv. 33; and Paræus, commenting on the Revelation, divides the whole book as a tragedy, into acts distinguished each by a chorus of heavenly harpings and song between. Heretofore men in highest dignity have laboured not a little to be thought able to compose a tragedy. Of that honour Dionysius the elder was no less ambitious, than before of his attaining to the tyranny. Augustus Cæsar also had begun his Ajax, but, unable to please his own judgment with what he had begun, left it unfinished. Seneca the philosopher is by some thought the author of those tragedies (at least the best of them) that go under that name. Gregory Nazianzen, a Father of the Church, thought it not unbeseeming the sanctity of his person to write a tragedy, which is entitled CHRIST SUFFERING. This is mentioned to vindicate tragedy from the small esteem,

or rather infamy, which in the account of many it undergoes at this day with other common interludes; happening through the poet's errour of intermixing comick stuff with tragick sadness and gravity; or introducing trivial and vulgar persons, which by all judicious hath been counted absurd; and brought in without discretion, corruptly to gratify the people. And though Ancient Tragedy use no prologue, yet using sometimes, in case of self-defence, or explanation, that which Martial calls an epistle; in behalf of this tragedy coming forth after the ancient manner, much different from what among us passes for best, thus much beforehand may be epistled; that Chorus is here introduced after the Greek manner, not ancient only but modern, and still in use among the Italians. In the modelling therefore of this poem, with good reason, the Ancients and Italians are rather followed, as of much more authority and fame. The measure of verse used in the Chorus is of all sorts, called by the Greeks Monostrophick, or rather Apolelymenon, without regard had to Strophe, Antistrophe, or Epode, which

were a kind of stanzas framed only for the musick, then used with the Chorus that sung; not essential to the poem, and therefore not material; or, being divided into stanzas or pauses, they may be called Allœostropha. Division into act and scene referring chiefly to the stage (to which this work never was intended) is here omitted.

It suffices if the whole drama be found not produced beyond the fifth act. Of the style and uniformity, and that commonly called the plot, whether intricate or explicit, which is nothing indeed but such œconomy, or disposition of the fable as may stand best with versimilitude and decorum; they only will best judge who are not unacquainted with Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, the three tragic poets unequalled yet by any, and the best rule of all who endeavour to write tragedy. The circumscription of time, wherein the whole drama begins and ends, is according to ancient rule, and best example, within the space of twenty-four hours.

THE ARGUMENT.

Samson, made captive, blind, and now in the prison at Gaza, there to labour as in a common workhouse, on a festival day, in the general cessation from labour, comes forth into the open air, to a place nigh, somewhat retired, there to sit a while and bemoan his condition. Where he happens at length to be visited by certain friends and equals of his tribe, which make the Chorus, who seek to comfort him what they can; then by his old father Manoah, who endeavours the like, and withal tells him his purpose to procure his liberty by ransom; lastly, that this feast was proclaimed by the Philistines as a day of thanksgiving for their deliverance from the hands of Samson, which yet more troubles him. Manoah then departs to prosecute his endeavour with the Philistine lords for Samson's redemption; who in the mean while is visited by other persons; and lastly by a publick officer to require his coming to the feast before the lords and people, to play or show his strength in their presence; he at first refuses, dismissing the publick officer with absolute denial to come; at length, persuaded inwardly that this was from God, he yields to go along with him, who came now the second time with great threatenings to fetch him: The Chorus yet remaining on the place, Manoah returns full of joyful hope, to procure ere long his sons deliverance: in the midst of which discourse an Hebrew comes in haste confusedly at first, and afterward more distinctly, relating the catastrophe, what Samson had done to the Philistines, and by accident to himself; wherewith the tragedy ends.

THE PERSONS.

SAMSON.

MANOAH, *the Father of Samson.*

DALILA, *his Wife,*

HARAPHA *of Gath.*

Publick Officer.

Messenger.

Chorus of Danites.

The *Scene* before the Prison in Gaza.

SAMSON AGONISTES.

SAMSON, *(an attendant leading him.)*

A LITTLE onward lend thy guiding hand
To these dark steps, a little further on:
For yonder bank hath choice of sun or shade:
There I am wont to sit, when any chance
Relieves me from my task of servile toil,
Daily in the common prison else enjoin'd me,
Where I, a prisoner chain'd, scarce freely draw
The air imprison'd also, close and damp,
Unwholesome draught: but here I feel amends,
The breath of Heaven fresh blowing, pure and sweet,
With day-spring born; here leave me to respire.
This day a solemn feast the people hold
To Dagon their sea-idol, and forbid

Laborious works; unwillingly this rest
Their superstition yields me; hence with leave
Retiring from the popular noise, I seek
This unfrequented place to find some ease,
Ease to the body some, none to the mind
From restless thoughts, that, like a deadly swarm
Of hornets arm'd, no sooner found alone,
But rush upon me thronging, and present
Times past, what once I was, and what am now.
O, wherefore was my birth from Heaven foretold
Twice by an Angel, who at last in sight
Of both my parents all in flames ascended
From off the altar, where an offering burn'd,
As in a fiery column charioting
His God-like presence, and from some great act
Or benefit reveal'd to Abraham's race?
Why was my breeding order'd and prescrib'd
As of a person separate to God,
Design'd for great exploits; if I must die
Betray'd, captiv'd, and both my eyes put out,
Made of my enemies the scorn and gaze;
To grind in brazen fetters under task
With this Heaven-gifted strength? O glorious
strength,
Put to the labour of a beast, debas'd
Lower than bond-slave! Promise was that I
Should Israel from Philistian yoke deliver;
Ask for this great deliverer now, and find him

Eyeless in Gaza at the mill with slaves,
Himself in bonds under Philistian yoke:
Yet stay, let me not rashly call in doubt
Divine prediction; what if all foretold
Had been fulfill'd but through mine own default,
Whom have I to complain of but myself?
Who this high gift of strength committed to me,
In what part lodg'd, how easily bereft me,
Under the seal of silence could not keep,
But weakly to a woman must reveal it,
O'ercome with importunity and tears.
O impotence of mind, in body strong!
But what is strength without a double share
Of wisdom? vast, unwieldy, burdensome,
Proudly secure, yet liable to fall
By weakest subtleties, not made to rule,
But to subserve where wisdom bears command!
God, when he gave me strength, to show withal
How slight the gift was, hung it in my hair.
But peace, I must not quarrel with the will
Of highest dispensation, which herein
Haply had ends above my reach to know:
Suffices that to me strength is my bane,
And proves the source of all my miseries;
So many, and so huge, that each apart
Would ask a life to wail; but chief of all,
O loss of sight, of thee I most complain!
Blind among enemies, O worse than chains,

Dungeon, or beggery, or decrepit age!
Light the prime work of God, to me is extinct,
And all her various objects of delight
Annull'd, which might in part my grief have eas'd,
Inferiour to the vilest now become
Of man or worm; the vilest here excel me;
They creep, yet see; I, dark in light, expos'd
To daily fraud, contempt, abuse, and wrong,
Within doors, or without, still as a fool,
In power of others, never in my own;
Scarce half I seem to live, dead more than half.
O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse
Without all hope of day!
O first created Beam, and thou great Word,
"Let there be light, and light was over all;"
Why am I thus bereav'd thy prime decree?
The sun to me is dark
And silent as the moon,
When she deserts the night,
Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.
Since light so necessary is to life,
And almost life itself, if it be true
That light is in the soul,
She all in every part; why was the sight
To such a tender ball as the eye confin'd,
So obvious and so easy to be quench'd?
And not, as feeling, through all parts diffus'd,

That she might look at will through every pore?
Then had I not been thus exil'd from light,
To live a life half dead, a living death,
And buried; but, O yet more miserable!
Myself my sepulchre, a moving grave;
Buried, yet not exempt,
By privilege of death and burial,
From worst of other evils, pains and wrongs;
But made hereby obnoxious more
To all the miseries of life.
Life in captivity
Among inhuman foes.
But who are these? for with joint pace I hear
The tread of many feet steering this way;
Perhaps my enemies, who come to stare
At my affliction! and perhaps to insult,
Their daily practice to afflict me more.

Enter CHORUS.

Chorus. This, this is he; softly a while,
Let us not break in upon him:
O change beyond report, thought, or belief!
See how he lies at random, carelessly diffus'd,
With languish'd head unpropt,
As one past hope, abandon'd,
And by himself given over;
In slavish habit, ill-fitted weeds
O'er worn and soil'd;

Or do my eyes misrepresent? Can this be he,
That heroick, that renown'd,
Irresistible Samson? whom unarm'd
No strength of man, or fiercest wild beast, could withstand;
Who tore the lion, as the lion tears the kid;
Ran on embattled armies clad in iron;
And, weaponless himself,
Made arms ridiculous, useless the forgery
Of brazen shield and spear, the hammer'd cuirass,
Chalybean temper'd steel, and frock of mail
Adamantéan proof?
But safest he who stood aloof,
When insupportably his foot advanc'd,
In scorn of their proud arms and warlike tools,
Spurn'd them to death by troops. The bold Ascalonite
Fled from his lion ramp; old warriours turn'd
Their plated backs under his heel;
Or groveling, soil'd their crested helmets in the dust.
Then with what trivial weapon came to hand,
The jaw of a dead ass, his sword of bone,
A thousand fore-skins fell, the flower of Palestine,
In Ramath-le chi, famous to this day.
Then by main force pull'd up, and on his shoulders bore
The gates of Azza, post, and massy bar,

Up to the hill by Hebron, seat of giants old,
No journey of a sabbath-day, and loaded so,
Like whom the Gentiles feign to bear up Heaven.
Which shall I first bewail,
Thy bondage or lost sight,
Prison within prison
Inseparably dark?
Thou art become (O worst imprisonment!)
The dungeon of thyself; thy soul,
(Which men enjoying sight oft without cause complain)
Imprison'd now indeed,
In real darkness of the body dwells,
Shut up from outward light
To incorporate with gloomy night;
For inward light alas!
Puts forth no visual beam.
O mirrour of our fickle state,
Since man on earth unparallell'd!
The rarer thy example stands,
By how much from the top of wondrous glory,
Strongest of mortal men,
To lowest pitch of abject fortune thou art fallen.
For him I reckon not in high estate
Whom long descent of birth,
Or the sphere of fortune, raises;
But thee whose strength, while virtue was her mate,
Might have subdued the earth,

Universally crown'd with highest praises.
Samson. I hear the sound of words; their sense the air
Dissolves unjointed ere it reach my ear.
Chorus. He speaks, let us draw nigh. Matchless in might,
The glory late of Israel, now the grief,
We come, thy friends and neighbours not unknown,
From Eshtaol and Zora's fruitful vale,
To visit or bewail thee; or if better,
Counsel or consolation we may bring,
Salve to thy sores; apt words have power to swage
The tumours of a troubled mind,
And are as balm to fester'd wounds.
Samson. Your coming, Friends, revives me; for I learn
Now of my own experience, not by talk,
How counterfeit a coin they are who friends
Bear in their superscription, (of the most
I would be understood) in prosperous days
They swarm, but in advérse withdraw their head,
Not to be found, though sought. Ye see, O Friends,
How many evils have enclos'd me round;
Yet that which was the worst now least afflicts me,
Blindness; for had I sight, confus'd with shame,
How could I once look up, or heave the head,
Who, like a foolish pilot, have shipwreck'd

My vessel trusted to me from above,
Gloriously rigg'd; and for a word, a tear,
Fool! have divulg'd the secret gift of God
To a deceitful woman? tell me, Friends,
Am I not sung and proverb'd for a fool
In every street? do they not say, how well
Are come upon him his deserts? yet why?
Immeasurable strength they might behold
In me, of wisdom nothing more than mean;
This with the other should, at least, have pair'd,
These two, proportion'd ill, drove me transverse.

Chorus. Tax not divine disposal; wisest men
Have err'd, and by bad women been deceiv'd;
And shall again, pretend they ne'er so wise.
Deject not then so overmuch thyself,
Who hast of sorrow thy full load besides:
Yet truth to say, I oft have heard men wonder
Why thou shouldst wed Philistian women rather
Than of thine own tribe fairer, or as fair,
At least of thy own nation, and as noble.

Samson. The first I saw at Timna, and she pleas'd
Me, not my parents, that I sought to wed
The daughter of an infidel: They knew not
That what I motion'd was of God; I knew
From intimate impulse, and therefore urg'd
The marriage on; that by occasion hence
I might begin Israel's deliverance,

The work to which I was divinely call'd.
She proving false, the next I took to wife
(O that I never had! fond wish too late,)
Was in the vale of Sorec, Dalila,
That specious monster, my accomplish'd snare.
I thought it lawful from my former act,
And the same end; still watching to oppress
Israel's oppressours: of what now I suffer
She was not the prime cause, but I myself,
Who, vanquish'd with a peal of words, (O weakness!)
Gave up my fort of silence to a woman.

Chorus. In seeking just occasion to provoke
The Philistine, thy country's enemy,
Thou never wast remiss, I bear thee witness:
Yet Israël still serves with all his sons.

Samson. That fault I take not on me, but transfer
On Israel's governours and heads of tribes,
Who, seeing those great acts which God had done
Singly by me against their conquerours,
Acknowledg'd not, or not at all consider'd,
Deliverance offer'd: I on the other side
Us'd no ambition to commend my deeds;
The deeds themselves, though mute, spoke loud the doer:
But they persisted deaf, and would not seem
To count them things worth notice, till at length
Their lords the Philistines with gather'd powers
Enter'd Judea seeking me, who then

Safe to the rock of Etham was retir'd;
Not flying, but fore-casting in what place
To set upon them, what advantag'd best:
Mean while the men of Judah, to prevent
The harrass of the land, beset me round;
I willingly on some conditions came
Into their hands, and they as gladly yield me
To the uncircumcis'd a welcome prey,
Bound with two cords; but cords to me were threads
Touch'd with the flame: on the whole host I flew
Unarm'd, and with a trivial weapon fell'd
Their choicest youth; they only liv'd who fled.
Had Judah that day join'd, or one whole tribe,
They had by this possess'd the towers of Gath,
And lorded over them whom they now serve;
But what more oft, in nations grown corrupt,
And by their vices brought to servitude,
Than to love bondage more than liberty,
Bondage with ease than strenuous liberty:
And to despise, or envy, or suspect
Whom God hath of his special favour rais'd
As their deliverer? if he aught begin,
How frequent to desert him, and at last
To heap ingratitude on worthiest deeds?
Chorus. Thy words to my remembrance bring
How Succoth and the fort of Penuel
Their great deliverer contemn'd,
The matchless Gideon, in pursuit

Of Madian and her vanquish'd kings:
And how ingrateful Ephraim
Had dealt with Jephtha, who by argument,
Not worse than by his shield and spear,
Defended Israel from the Ammonite,
Had not his prowess quell'd their pride
In that sore battle, when so many died
Without reprieve, adjudg'd to death,
For want of well pronouncing Shibboleth.

Samson. Of such examples add me to the roll;
Me easily indeed mine may neglect,
But God's propos'd deliverance not so.

Chorus. Just are the ways of God,
And justifiable to Men;
Unless there be, who think not God at all:
If any be, they walk obscure;
For of such doctrine never was there school,
But the heart of the fool,
And no man therein doctor but himself.

Yet more there be, who doubt his ways not just,
As to his own edicts found contradicting,
Then give the reins to wandering thought,
Regardless of his glory's diminution;
Till, by their own perplexities involv'd,
They ravel more, still less resolv'd,
But never find self-satisfying solution.

As if they would confine the Interminable,
And tie him to his own prescript,

Who made our laws to bind us, not himself,
And hath full right to exempt
Whom so it pleases him by choice
From national obstriction, without taint
Of sin, or legal debt;
For with his own laws he can best dispense.
He would not else, who never wanted means,
Nor in respect of the enemy just cause,
To set his people free,
Have prompted this heroick Nazarite,
Against his vow of strictest purity,
To seek in marriage that fallacious bride,
Unclean, unchaste.
Down, reason, then; at least vain reasonings, down:
Though reason here aver,
That mortal verdict quits her of unclean:
Unchaste was subsequent, her stain not his.
But see here comes thy reverend Sire
With careful step, locks white as down,
Old Manoah: Advise
Forthwith how thou ought'st to receive him.
Samson. Ay me! another inward grief, awak'd
With mention of that name, renews the assault.

Enter MANOAH.

Manoah. Brethren and men of Dan, for such ye seem,

Though in this uncouth place; if old respect,
As I suppose, towards your once gloried friend,
My son, now captive, hither hath inform'd
Your younger feet, while mine cast back with age
Came lagging after; say if he be here!

Chorus. As signal now in low dejected state,
As erst in highest, behold him where he lies.

Manoah. O miserable change! is this the man,
That invincible Samson, far renown'd,
The dread of Israel's foes, who with a strength
Equivalent to Angels walk'd their streets,
None offering fight; who single combatant
Duell'd their armies rank'd in proud array,
Himself an army, now unequal match
To save himself against a coward arm'd
At one spear's length. O ever-failing trust
In mortal strength! and oh! what not in man
Deceivable and vain? Nay, what thing good
Pray'd for, but often proves our woe, our bane?
I pray'd for children, and thought barrenness
In wedlock a reproach; I gain'd a son,
And such a son as all men hail'd me happy;
Who would be now a father in my stead?
O wherefore did God grant me my request
And as a blessing with such pomp adorn'd?
Why are his gifts desirable, to tempt
Our earnest prayers, then, given with solemn hand
As graces, draw a scorpion's tail behind?

For this did the Angel twice descend? for this
Ordain'd thy nurture holy, as of a plant
Select, and sacred, glorious for a while,
The miracle of men; then in a hour
Ensnar'd, assaulted, overcome, led bound,
Thy foes' derision, captive, poor, and blind,
Into a dungeon thrust, to work with slaves?
Alas! methinks whom God hath chosen once
To worthiest deeds, if he through frailty err,
He should not so o'erwhelm, and as a thrall
Subject him to so foul indignities,
Be it but for honour's sake of former deeds.

Samson. Appoint not heavenly disposition, Father;
Nothing of all these evils hath befall'n me
But justly; I myself have brought them on,
Sole author I, sole cause: If aught seem vile,
As vile hath been my folly, who have profan'd
The mystery of God given me under pledge
Of vow, and have betray'd it to a woman,
A Canaanite, my faithless enemy.
This well I knew, nor was at all surpris'd,
But warn'd by oft experience: Did not she
Of Timna first betray me, and reveal
The secret wrested from me in her highth
Of nuptial love profess'd, carrying it straight
To them who had corrupted her, my spies,
And rivals? In this other was there found
More faith, who also in her prime of love,

Spousal embraces, vitiated with gold,
Though offer'd only, by the scent conceiv'd
Her spurious first-born, treason against me?
Thrice she assay'd with flattering prayers and sighs
And amorous reproaches, to win from me,
My capital secret, in what part my strength
Lay stor'd, in what part summ'd, that she might
know;
Thrice I deluded her, and turn'd to sport
Her importunity, each time perceiving
How openly, and with what impudence
She purpos'd to betray me, and (which was worse
Than undissembled hate) with what contempt
She sought to make me traitor to myself;
Yet the fourth time, when, mustering all her wiles,
With blandish'd parlies, feminine assaults,
Tongue-batteries, she surceas'd not, day nor night,
To storm me over-watch'd, and wearied out,
At times when men seek most repose and rest,
I yielded, and unlock'd her all my heart,
Who, with a grain of manhood well resolv'd,
Might easily have shook off all her snares:
But foul effeminacy held me yok'd
Her bond-slave; O indignity, O blot
To honour and religion! servile mind
Rewarded well with servile punishment!
The base degree to which I now am fallen,
These rags, this grinding is not yet so base

As was my former servitude, ignoble,
Unmanly, ignominious, infamous,
True slavery, and that blindness worse than this,
That saw not how degenerately I serv'd.
Manoah. I cannot praise thy marriage-choices, Son,
Rather approv'd them not; but thou didst plead
Divine impulsion prompting how thou might'st
Find some occasion to infest our foes.
I state not that; this I am sure, our foes
Found soon occasion thereby to make thee
Their captive, and their triumph; thou the sooner
Temptation found'st, or over-potent charms,
To violate the sacred trust of silence
Deposited within thee; which to have kept
Tacit, was in thy power: true; and thou bear'st
Enough, and more, the burden of that fault;
Bitterly hast thou paid, and still art paying,
That rigid score. A worse thing yet remains;
This day the Philistines a popular feast
Here celebrate in Gaza; and proclaim
Great pomp, and sacrifice, and praises loud,
To Dagon, as their God who hath deliver'd
Thee, Samson, bound and blind into their hands,
Them out of thine, who slew'st them many a slain.
So Dagon shall be magnified, and God,
Besides whom is no God, compar'd with idols,
Disglorified, blasphem'd, and had in scorn

By the idolatrous rout amidst their wine;
Which to have come to pass by means of thee,
Samson, of all thy sufferings think the heaviest,
Of all reproach the most with shame that ever
Could have befallen thee and thy father's house.

Samson. Father, I do acknowledge and confess
That I this honour, I this pomp, have brought
To Dagon, and advanc'd his praises high
Among the Heathen round; to God have brought
Dishonour, obloquy, and op'd the mouths
Of idolists, and atheists; have brought scandal
To Israel, diffidence of God, and doubt
In feeble hearts, propense enough before
To waver, or fall off and join with idols;
Which is my chief affliction, shame and sorrow,
The anguish of my soul, that suffers not
Mine eye to harbour sleep, or thoughts to rest.
This only hope relieves me, that the strife
With me hath end; all the contest is now
'Twixt God and Dagon; Dagon hath presum'd,
Me overthrown, to enter lists with God,
His deity comparing and preferring
Before the God of Abraham. He, be sure,
Will not connive, or linger, thus provok'd,
But will arise, and his great name assert:
Dagon must stoop, and shall ere long receive
Such a discomfit, as shall quite despoil him
Of all these boasted trophies won on me,

And with confusion blank his worshippers.

Manoah. With cause this hope relieves thee, and these words
I as a prophecy receive; for God,
Nothing more certain, will not long defer
To vindicate the glory of his Name
Against all competition, nor will long
Endure it doubtful whether God be Lord,
Or Dagon. But for thee what shall be done?
Thou must not, in the mean while here forgot,
Lie in this miserable loathsome plight,
Neglected. I already have made way
To some Philistian lords, with whom to treat
About thy ransom: well they may by this
Have satisfied their utmost of revenge
By pains and slaveries, worse than death, inflicted
On thee, who now no more canst do them harm.

Samson. Spare that proposal, Father: spare the trouble
Of that Sollicitation; let me here,
As I deserve, pay on my punishment;
And expiate, if possible, my crime,
Shameful garrulity. To have reveal'd
Secrets of men, the secrets of a friend,
How heinous had the fact been, how deserving
Contempt, and scorn of all, to be excluded
All friendship, and avoided as a blab,
The mark of fool set on his front? But I

God's counsel have not kept, his holy secret
Presumptuously have publish'd, impiously,
Weakly at least, and shamefully; a sin
That Gentiles in their parables condemn
To their abyss and horrid pains confin'd.

Manoah. Be penitent, and for thy fault contrite;
But act not in thy own affliction, Son:
Repent the sin; but, if the punishment
Thou canst avoid, self-preservation bids;
Or the execution leave to high disposal,
And let another hand, not thine, exact
Thy penal forfeit from thyself: perhaps
God will relent, and quit thee all his debt;
Who ever more approves, and more accepts,
(Best pleas'd with humble and filial submission,)
Him, who imploring mercy, sues for life,
Than who, self-rigorous, chooses death as due;
Which argues over-just, and self-displeas'd
For self-offence, more than for God offended.
Reject not then what offer'd means, who knows
But God hath set before us, to return thee
Home to thy country and his sacred house,
Where thou mayst bring thy offerings, to avert
His further ire, with prayers and vows renew'd?

Samson. His pardon I implore; but as for life,
To what end should I seek it? when in strength
All mortals I excell'd, and great in hopes
With youthful courage, and magnanimous thoughts

Of birth from Heaven foretold, and high exploits,
Full of divine instinct, after some proof
Of acts indeed heroick, far beyond
The sons of Anak, famous now and blaz'd,
Fearless of danger, like a petty God
I walk'd about admir'd of all and dreaded
On hostile ground, none daring my affront.
Then swollen with pride into the snare I fell
Of fair fallacious looks, venereal trains,
Soften'd with pleasure and voluptuous life;
At length to lay my head and hallow'd pledge
Of all my strength in the lascivious lap
Of a deceitful concubine, who shore me
Like a tame wether, all my precious fleece,
Then turn'd me out ridiculous, despoil'd,
Shaven, and disarm'd among mine enemies.

Chorus. Desire of wine and all delicious drinks,
Which many a famous warriour overturns,
Thou couldst repress; nor did the dancing ruby
Sparkling, out-pour'd, the flavour, or the smell,
Or taste that cheers the heart of Gods and Men,
Allure thee from the cool crystalline stream.

Samson. Wherever fountain or fresh current flow'd
Against the eastern ray, translucent, pure
With touch ethereal of Heaven's fiery rod,
I drank, from the clear milky juice allaying
Thirst, and refresh'd: nor envied them the grape

Whose heads that turbulent liquor fills with fumes.
Chorus. O madness, to think use of strongest wines
And strongest drinks our chief support of health,
When God with these forbidd'n made choice to rear
His mighty champion, strong above compare,
Whose drink was only from the liquid brook.
Samson. But what avail'd this temperance, not complete
Against another object more enticing?
What boots it at one gate to make defence,
And at another to let in the foe,
Effeminately vanquish'd? by which means,
Now blind, disheartened, sham'd, dishonour'd, quell'd,
To what can I be useful, wherein serve
My nation, and the work from Heaven impos'd,
But to sit idle on the houshold hearth,
A burdenous drone; to visitants a gaze,
Or pitied object, these redundant locks
Robustious to no purpose clustering down,
Vain monument of strength; till length of years
And sedentary numness craze my limbs
To a contemptible old age obscure?
Here rather let me drudge, and earn my bread;
Till vermin, or the draff of servile food,
Consume me, and oft-invocated death

Hasten the welcome end of all my pains.

Manoah. Wilt thou then serve the Philistines with that gift
Which was expressly given thee to annoy them?
Better at home lie bed-rid, not only idle,
Inglorious, unemploy'd, with age outworn.
But God, who caus'd a fountain at thy prayer
From the dry ground to spring, thy thirst to allay
After the brunt of battle, can as easy
Cause light again within thy eyes to spring,
Wherewith to serve him better than thou hast;
And I persuade me so; why else this strength
Miraculous yet remaining in those locks?
His might continues in thee not for nought,
Nor shall his wonderous gifts be frustrate thus.

Samson. All otherwise to me my thoughts portend,
That these dark orbs no more shall treat with light,
Nor the other light of life continue long,
But yield to double darkness nigh at hand:
So much I feel my genial spirits droop,
My hopes all flat, Nature within me seems
In all her functions weary of herself;
My race of glory run, and race of shame,
And I shall shortly be with them that rest.

Manoah. Believe not these suggestions, which proceed
From anguish of the mind and humours black,

That mingle with thy fancy. I however
Must not omit a father's timely care
To prosecute the means of thy deliverance
By ransom, or how else: mean while be calm,
And healing words from these thy friends admit,
[*Exit.*]

Samson. O that Torment should not be confin'd
To the body's wounds and sores,
With maladies innumerable
In heart, head, breast, and reins;
But must secret passage find
To the inmost mind,
Their exercise all his fierce accidents,
And on her purest spirits prey,
As on entrails, joints, and limbs,
With answerable pains, but more intense,
Though void of corporal sense.
My griefs not only pain me
As a lingering disease,
But, finding no redress, ferment and rage;
Nor less than wounds immedicable
Rankle, and fester, and gangrene,
To black mortification.
Thoughts, my tormenters, arm'd with deadly stings,
Mangle my apprehensive tenderest parts,
Exasperate, exulcerate, and raise
Dire inflammation, which no cooling herb
Or medicinal liquour can asswage,

Nor breath of vernal air from snowy Alp,
Sleep hath forsook and given me o'er
To death's benumming opium as my only cure:
Thence faintings, swoonings of despair,
And sense of Heaven's desertion.
I was his nursling once, and choice delight,
His destin'd from the womb,
Promis'd by heavenly message twice descending.
Under his special eye
Abstemious I grew up, and thriv'd amain;
He led me on to mightiest deeds,
Above the nerve of mortal arm,
Against the uncircumcis'd, our enemies:
But now has cast me off as never known,
And to those cruel enemies,
Whom I by his appointment had provok'd,
Left me all helpless with the irreparable loss
Of sight, reserv'd alive to be repeated
The subject of their cruelty or scorn.
Nor am I in the list of them that hope;
Hopeless are all my evils, all remediless:
This one prayer yet remains, might I be heard,
No long petition, speedy death,
The close of all my miseries, and the balm.
Chorus. Many are the sayings of the wise,
In ancient and in modern books inroll'd,
Extolling patience as the truest fortitude;
And to the bearing well of all calamities,

All chances incident to man's frail life,
Consolatories writ
With studied argument, and much persuasion sought
Lenient of grief and anxious thought:
But with the afflicted in his pangs their sound
Little prevails, or rather seems a tune
Harsh, and of dissonant mood from his complaint;
Unless he feel within
Some source of consolation from above,
Secret refreshings, that repair his strength,
And fainting spirits uphold.
God of our fathers, what is man!
That thou towards him with hand so various,
Or might I say contrarious,
Temper'st thy providence through his short course,
Not evenly, as thou rul'st
The angelick Orders, and inferior creatures mute,
Irrational and brute.
Nor do I name of men the common rout,
That wandering loose about
Grow up and perish, as the summer-fly,
Heads without name no more remember'd;
But such as thou hast solemnly elected,
With gifts and graces eminently adorn'd,
To some great work, thy glory,
And people's safety, which in part they effect:
Yet toward these thus dignified, thou oft,
Amidst their highth of noon,

Changest thy countenance, and thy hand, with no
regard
Of highest favours past
From thee on them, or them to thee of service.
Nor only dost degrade them, or remit
To life obscur'd, which were a fair dismission,
But throw'st them lower than thou didst exalt them
high,
Unseemly falls in human eye,
Too grievous for the trespass or omission;
Oft leav'st them to the hostile sword
Of Heathen and profane, their carcasses
To dogs and fowls a prey, or else captiv'd;
Or to the unjust tribunals, under change of times,
And condemnation of the ingrateful multitude.
If these they 'scape, perhaps in poverty
With sickness and disease thou bow'st them down,
Painful diseases and deform'd,
In crude old age:
Though not disordinate, yet causeless suffering
The punishment of dissolute days: in fine,
Just, or unjust, alike seem miserable,
For oft alike both come to evil end.
So deal not with this once thy glorious champion,
The image of thy strength, and mighty minister.
What do I beg? how hast thou dealt already!
Behold him in his state calamitous, and turn
His labours, for thou canst, to peaceful end.

But who is this, what thing of sea or land?
Female of sex it seems,
That so bedeck'd, ornate, and gay,
Comes this way sailing
Like a stately ship
Of Tarsus, bound for the isles
Of Javan or Gadire
With all her bravery on, and tackle trim,
Sails fill'd, and streamers waving,
Courted by all the winds that hold them play,
An amber scent of odorous perfume
Her harbinger, a damsel train behind;
Some rich Philistian matron she may seem;
And now at nearer view, no other certain
Than Dalila thy Wife.

Samson My Wife! my Traitress: let her not come near me.

Chorus. Yet on she moves, now stands and eyes thee fix'd,
About to have spoke; but now, with head declin'd,
Like a fair flower surcharg'd with dew, she weeps.
And words address'd seem into tears dissolv'd,
Wetting the borders of her silken veil:
But now again she makes address to speak.

Enter DALILA.

Dalila. With doubtful feet and wavering resolution

I come, still dreading thy displeasure, Samson,
Which to have merited, without excuse,
I cannot but acknowledge; yet, if tears
May expiate, (though the fact more evil drew
In the perverse event than I foresaw,)
My penance hath not slacken'd, though my pardon
No way assur'd. But conjugal affection,
Prevailing over fear and timorous doubt,
Hath led me on, desirous to behold
Once more thy face, and know of thy estate,
If aught in my ability may serve
To lighten what thou suffer'st, and appease
Thy mind with what amends is in my power,
Though late, yet in some part to recompense
My rash, but more unfortunate, misdeed.

Samson. Out, out, Hyæna! these are thy wonted arts,
And arts of every woman false like thee,
To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray,
Then as repentant to submit, beseech,
And reconcilement move with feign'd remorse,
Confess, and promise wonders in her change;
Not truly penitent, but chief to try
Her husband, how far urg'd his patience bears,
His virtue or weakness which way to assail:
Then with more cautious and instructed skill
Again transgresses, and again submits;
That wisest and best men, full oft beguil'd,

With goodness principled not to reject
The penitent, but ever to forgive,
Are drawn to wear out miserable days,
Entangled with a poisonous bosom snake,
If not by quick destruction soon cut off,
As I by thee, to ages an example.

Dalila. Yet hear me, Samson; not that I endeavour
To lessen or extenuate my offence,
But that on the other side, if it be weigh'd
By itself, with aggravations not surcharg'd,
Or else with just allowance counterpois'd,
I may, if possible, thy pardon find
The easier towards me, or thy hatred less.
First granting, as I do, it was a weakness
In me, but incident to all our sex,
Curiosity, inquisitive, impórtune
Of secrets, then with like infirmity
To publish them, both common female faults:
Was it not weakness also to make known
For importunity, that is for nought,
Wherein consisted all thy strength and safety?
To what I did thou showd'st me first the way.
But I to enemies reveal'd, and should not:
Nor should'st thou have trusted that to woman's frailty:
Ere I to thee, thou to thyself wast cruel.
Let weakness then with weakness come to parle,

So near related, or the same of kind,
Thine forgive mine; that men may censure thine
The gentler, if severely thou exact not
More strength from me, than in thyself was found.
And what if love, which thou interpret'st hate,
The jealousy of love, powerful of sway
In human hearts, nor less in mine towards thee,
Caus'd what I did? I saw thee mutable
Of fancy, fear'd lest one day thou would'st leave me
As her at Timna, sought by all means therefore
How to endear, and hold thee to me firmest:
No better way I saw than by impórtuning
To learn thy secrets, get into my power
Thy key of strength and safety: thou wilt say,
Why then reveal'd? I was assur'd by those
Who tempted me, that nothing was design'd
Against thee but safe custody, and hold:
That made for me; I knew that liberty
Would draw thee forth to perilous enterprises,
While I at home sat full of cares and fears,
Wailing thy absence in my widow'd bed;
Here I should still enjoy thee, day and night,
Mine and love's prisoner, not the Philistines',
Whole to myself, unhazarded abroad,
Fearless at home of partners in my love.
These reasons in love's law have past for good,
Though fond and reasonless to some perhaps;

And love hath oft, well meaning, wrought much woe,
Yet always pity or pardon hath obtain'd.
Be not unlike all others, not austere
As thou art strong, inflexible as steel.
If thou in strength all mortals dost exceed,
In uncompassionate anger do not so.

Samson. How cunningly the sorceress displays
Her own transgressions, to upbraid me mine!
That malice, not repentance, brought thee hither,
By this appears: I gave, thou say'st, the example,
I led the way; bitter reproach, but true;
I to myself was false ere thou to me;
Such pardon therefore as I give my folly,
Take to thy wicked deed; which when thou seest
Impartial, self-severe, inexorable,
Thou wilt renounce thy seeking, and much rather
Confess it feign'd: Weakness is thy excuse,
And I believe it; weakness to resist
Philistian gold: If weakness may excuse,
What murderer, what traitor, parricide,
Incestuous, sacrilegious, but may plead it?
All wickedness is weakness: the plea therefore
With God or Man will gain thee no remission.
But love constrain'd thee; call it furious rage
To satisfy thy lust: love seeks to have love;
My love how could'st thou hope, who took'st the way

To raise in me inexpiable hate,
Knowing, as needs I must, by thee betray'd?
In vain thou striv'st to cover shame with shame,
Or by evasions thy crime uncover'st more.

Dalila. Since thou determin'st weakness for no plea
In man or woman, though to thy own condemning,
Hear what assaults I had, what snares besides,
What sieges girt me round, ere I consented;
Which might have aw'd the best-resolv'd of men,
The constantest, to have yielded without blame.
It was not gold, as to my charge thou lay'st,
That wrought with me: Thou know'st the magistrates
And princes of my country came in person,
Solicited, commanded, threaten'd, urg'd,
Adjur'd by all the bonds of civil duty
And of religion, press'd how just it was,
How honourable, how glorious to entrap
A common enemy, who had destroy'd
Such numbers of our nation: and the priest
Was not behind, but ever at my ear,
Preaching how meritorious with the Gods
It would be to ensnare an irreligious
Dishonourer of Dagon: what had I
To oppose against such powerful arguments?
Only my love of thee held long debate,
And combated in silence all these reasons

With hard contést: at length that grounded maxim,
So rife and celebrated in the mouths
Of wisest men, that to the publick good
Private respects must yield, with grave authority
Took full possession of me, and prevail'd;
Virtue, as I thought, truth, duty, so enjoining.

Samson. I thought where all thy circling wiles would end;
In feign'd religion, smooth hypocrisy!
But had thy love, still odiously pretended,
Been, as it ought, sincere, it would have taught thee
Far other reasonings, brought forth other deeds.
I before all the daughters of my tribe
And of my nation, chose thee from among
My enemies, lov'd thee, as too well thou knew'st;
Too well; unbosom'd all my secrets to thee,
Not out of levity, but over-power'd
By thy request, who could deny thee nothing;
Yet now am judg'd an enemy. Why then
Did'st thou at first receive me for thy husband,
Then, as since then, thy country's foe profess'd?
Being once a wife, for me thou wast to leave
Parents and country; nor was I then subject,
Nor under their protection but my own,
Thou mine, not theirs: If aught against my life
Thy country sought of thee, it sought unjustly,
Against the law of nature, law of nations;

No more thy country, but an impious crew
Of men conspiring to uphold their state
By worse than hostile deeds, violating the ends
For which our country is a name so dear;
Not therefore to be obey'd. But zeal mov'd thee;
To please thy Gods thou didst it; Gods unable
To acquit themselves and prosecute their foes
But by ungodly deeds, the contradiction
Of their own deity, Gods cannot be;
Less therefore to be pleas'd, obey'd, or fear'd.
These false pretexts and varnish'd colours failing,
Bare in thy guilt, how foul must thou appear!

Dalila. In argument with men a woman ever
Goes by the worse, whatever be her cause.

Samson. For want of words no doubt, or lack of breath;
Witness when I was worried with thy peals.

Dalila. I was a fool, too rash, and quite mistaken
In what I thought would have succeeded best.
Let me obtain forgiveness of thee, Samson:
Afford me place to show what recompence
Towards thee I intend for what I have misdone,
Misguided; only what remains past cure
Bear not too sensibly, nor still insist
To afflict thyself in vain: though sight be lost,
Life yet hath many solaces, enjoy'd
Where other senses want not their delights
At home in leisure and domestick ease,

Exempt from many a care and chance, to which
Eye-sight exposes daily men abroad.
I to the Lords will intercede, not doubting
Their favourable ear that I may fetch thee
From forth this loathsome prison house, to abide
With me, where my redoubled love and care
With nursing diligence, to me glad office,
May ever tend about thee to old age
With all things grateful cheer'd, and so supplied,
That, what by me thou hast lost thou least shalt
miss.

Samson. No, no; of my condition take no care:
It fits not; thou and I long since are twain:
Nor think me so unwary or accurs'd,
To bring my feet again into the snare
Where once I have been caught: I know thy trains,
Though dearly to my cost, thy gins, and toils;
Thy fair enchanted cup, and warbling charms,
No more on me have power; their force is null'd;
So much of adder's wisdom I have learn'd,
To fence my ear against thy sorceries.
If in my flower of youth and strength, when all men
Lov'd, honour'd, fear'd me, thou alone could'st
hate me
Thy husband, slight me, sell me, and forego me;
How wouldst thou use me now, blind, and thereby
Deceivable, in most things as a child
Helpless, thence easily contemn'd, and scorn'd,

And last neglected? How would'st thou insult,
When I must live uxorious to thy will
In perfect thraldom, how again betray me,
Bearing my words and doings to the Lords
To gloss upon, and, censuring, frown or smile!
This jail I count the house of liberty
To thine, whose doors my feet shall never enter.

Dalila. Let me approach at least, and touch thy hand.

Samson. Not for thy life, lest fierce remembrance wake
My sudden rage to tear thee joint by joint,
At distance I forgive thee; go with that;
Bewail thy falshood, and the pious works
It hath brought forth to make thee memorable
Among illustrious women, faithful wives!
Cherish thy hasten'd widowhood with the gold
Of matrimonial treason! so farewell.

Dalila. I see thou art implacable, more deaf
To prayers, than winds and seas; yet winds to seas
Are reconcil'd at length, and sea to shore:
Thy anger, unappeasable, still rages,
Eternal tempest, never to be calm'd.
Why do I humble thus myself, and, suing
For peace, reap nothing but repulse and hate?
Bid go with evil omen, and the brand
Of infamy upon my name denounc'd?

To mix with thy concernments I desist
Henceforth, nor too much disapprove my own.
Fame, if not double-fac'd, is double-mouth'd,
And with contrary blast proclaims most deeds;
On both his wings, one black, the other white,
Bears greatest names in his wild aery flight.
My name perhaps among the circumcis'd
In Dan, in Judah, and the bordering tribes,
To all posterity may stand defam'd,
With malediction mention'd, and the blot
Of falshood most unconjugal traduc'd.
But in my country, where I most desire,
In Ecron, Gaza, Asdod, and in Gath,
I shall be nam'd among the famousest
Of women, sung at solemn festivals,
Living and dead recorded, who, to save
Her country from a fierce destroyer, chose
Above the faith of wedlock-bands; my tomb
With odours visited and annual flowers;
Not less renown'd than in mount Ephraim
Jael, who with inhospitable guile
Smote Sisera sleeping, through the temples nail'd.
Nor shall I count it heinous to enjoy
The publick marks of honour and reward,
Conferr'd upon me, for the piety
Which to my country I was judg'd to have shown.
At this whoever envies or repines,

I leave him to his lot, and like my own. [*Exit.*]

Chorus. She's gone, a manifest serpent by her sting
Discover'd in the end, till now conceal'd.

Samson. So let her go; God sent her to debase me,
And aggravate my folly, who committed
To such a viper his most sacred trust
Of secresy, my safety, and my life.

Chorus. Yet beauty, though injurious, hath strange power,
After offence returning, to regain
Love once possess'd, nor can be easily
Repuls'd, without much inward passion felt
And secret sting of amorous remorse.

Samson. Love-quarrels oft in pleasing concord end,
Not wedlock-treachery endangering life.

Chorus. It is not virtue, wisdom, valour, wit,
Strength, comeliness of shape, or amplest merit,
That woman's love can win or long inherit;
But what it is, hard is to say,
Harder to hit,
(Which way soever men refer it,)
Much like thy riddle, Samson, in one day
Or seven, though one should musing sit.
If any of these, or all, the Timnian bride
Had not so soon preferr'd

Thy paranymph, worthless to thee compar'd,
Successor in thy bed,
Nor both so loosly disallied
Their nuptials, nor this last so treacherously
Had shorn the fatal harvest of thy head.
Is it for that such outward ornament
Was lavish'd on their sex, that inward gifts
Were left for haste unfinish'd, judgement scant,
Capacity not rais'd to apprehend
Or value what is best
In choice, but oftest to affect the wrong?
Or was too much of self-love mix'd,
Of constancy no root infix'd,
That either they love nothing, or not long?
  Whate'er it be, to wisest men and best
Seeming at first all heavenly under virgin veil,
Soft, modest, meek, demure,
Once join'd, the contrary she proves, a thorn
Intestine, far within defensive arms
A cleaving mischief, in his way to virtue
Adverse and turbulent, or by her charms
Draws him awry enslav'd
With dotage, and his sense deprav'd
To folly and shameful deeds which ruin ends.
What pilot so expert but needs must wreck
Imbark'd with such a steers-mate at the helm?
  Favour'd of Heaven, who finds
One virtuous, rarely found,

That in domestick good combines;
Happy that house! his way to peace is smooth:
But virtue, which breaks through all opposition,
And all temptation can remove,
Most shines, and most is acceptable above.
Therefore God's universal law
Gave to the man despotick power
Over his female in due awe,
Nor from that right to part an hour,
Smile she or lour;
So shall he least confusion draw
On his whole life, not sway'd
By female usurpation, or dismay'd.
But had we best retire? I see a storm.
Samson. Fair days have oft contracted wind and rain.
Chorus. But this another kind of tempest brings.
Samson. Be less abstruse, my riddling days are past.
Chorus. Look now for no enchanting voice, nor fear
The bait of honied words; a rougher tongue
Draws hitherward; I know him by his stride,
The giant Harapha of Gath, his look
Haughty, as is his pile high-built and proud.
Comes he in peace? what wind hath blown him hither
I less conjecture than when first I saw

The sumptuous Dalila floating this way:
His habit carries peace, his brow defiance.

Samson. Or peace or not, alike to me he comes.

Chorus. His fraught we soon shall know, he now arrives.

Enter HARAPHA.

Harapha. I come not, Samson, to condole thy chance,
As these perhaps, yet wish it had not been,
Though for no friendly intent. I am of Gath;
Men call me Harapha, of stock renown'd
As Og, or Anak, and the Emims old
That Kiriathaim held; thou know'st me now,
If thou at all art known. Much I have heard
Of thy prodigious might and feats perform'd,
Incredible to me, in this displeas'd,
That I was never present on the place
Of those encounters, where we might have tried
Each other's force in camp or listed field;
And now am come to see of whom such noise
Hath walk'd about, and each limb to survey,
If thy appearance answer loud report.

Samson. The way to know were not to see but taste.

Harapha. Dost thou already single me? I thought
Gyves and the mill had tam'd thee. O that fortune
Had brought me to the field, where thou art fam'd

To have wrought such wonders with an ass's jaw!
I should have forc'd thee soon with other arms,
Or left thy carcass where the ass lay thrown:
So had the glory of prowess been recover'd
To Palestine, won by a Philistine,
From the unforeskin'd race, of whom thou bear'st
The highest name for valiant acts; that honour,
Certain to have won by mortal duel from thee,
I lose, prevented by thy eyes put out.

Samson. Boast not of what thou would'st have done, but do
What then thou would'st; thou seest it in thy hand.

Harapha. To combat with a blind man I disdain,
And thou hast need much washing to be touch'd.

Samson. Such usage as your honourable lords
Afford me, assassinated and betray'd,
Who durst not with their whole united powers
In fight withstand me single and unarm'd,
Nor in the house with chamber ambushes
Close-banded durst attack me, no, not sleeping,
Till they had hir'd a woman with their gold
Breaking her marriage-faith to circumvent me.
Therefore, without feign'd shifts, let be assign'd
Some narrow place enclos'd, where sight may give thee,
Or rather flight, no great advantage on me;
Then put on all thy gorgeous arms, thy helmet
And brigandine of brass, thy broad habergeon,

Vant-brace and greves, and gauntlet, add thy spear,
A weaver's beam, and seven-times-folded shield;
I only with an oaken staff will meet thee,
And raise such outcries on thy clatter'd iron,
Which long shall not withhold me from thy head,
That in a little time, while breath remains thee,
Thou oft shalt wish thyself at Gath, to boast
Again in safety what thou would'st have done
To Samson, but shalt never see Gath more.

Harapha. Thou durst not thus disparage glorious arms,
Which greatest heroes have in battle worn,
Their ornament and safety, had not spells
And black enchantment, some magician's art,
Arm'd thee or charm'd thee strong, which thou from Heaven
Feignd'st at thy birth, was given thee in thy hair,
Where strength can least abide, though all thy hairs
Were bristles rang'd like those that ridge the back
Of chaf'd wild boars, or ruffled porcupines.

Samson. I know no spells, use no forbidden arts;
My trust is in the living God, who gave me
At my nativity this strength, diffus'd
No less through all my sinews, joints, and bones,
Than thine, while I preserv'd these locks unshorn,
The pledge of my unviolated vow.
For proof hereof, if Dagon be thy God,
Go to his temple, invocate his aid

With solemnest devotion, spread before him
How highly it concerns his glory now
To frustrate and dissolve these magick spells,
Which I to be the power of Israel's God
Avow, and challenge Dagon to the test,
Offering to combat thee his champion bold,
With the utmost of his Godhead seconded:
Then thou shalt see, or rather, to thy sorrow,
Soon feel, whose God is strongest, thine or mine.

Harapha. Presume not on thy God, whate'er he be;
Thee he regards not, owns not, hath cut off
Quite from his people, and deliver'd up
Into thy enemies' hand, permitted them
To put out both thine eyes, and fetter'd send thee
Into the common prison, there to grind
Among the slaves and asess thy comrades,
As good for nothing else; no better service
With those thy boisterous locks, no worthy match
For valour to assail, nor by the sword
Of noble warriour, so to stain his honour,
But by the barber's razor best subdued.

Samson. All these indignities, for such they are
From thine, these evils I deserve, and more,
Acknowledge them from God inflicted on me
Justly, yet despair not of his final pardon,
Whose ear is ever open, and his eye
Gracious to re-admit the suppliant:

In confidence whereof I once again
Defy thee to a trial of mortal fight,
By combat to decide whose God is God,
Thine, or whom I with Israel's sons adore.

Harapha. Fair honour that thou dost thy God,
in trusting
He will accept thee to defend his cause,
A Murderer, a Revolter, and a Robber!

Samson. Tongue-doughty Giant, how dost thou
prove me these?

Harapha. Is not thy nation subject to our lords?
Their magistrates confess'd it, when they took thee
As a league-breaker, and deliver'd bound
Into our hands: for hadst thou not committed
Notorious murder on those thirty men
At Ascalon, who never did thee harm,
Then like a robber stripp'dst them of their robes?
The Philistines, when thou hadst broke the league,
Went up with armed powers thee only seeking,
To others did no violence nor spoil.

Samson. Among the daughters of the Philistines
I chose a wife, which argued me no foe;
And in your city held my nuptial feast:
But your ill-meaning politician lords,
Under pretence of bridal friends and guests,
Appointed to await me thirty spies,
Who, threatening cruel death, constrain'd the bride
To wring from me, and tell to them, my secret,

That solv'd the riddle which I had propos'd.
When I perceiv'd all set on enmity,
As on my enemies, wherever chanc'd,
I us'd hostility, and took their spoil.
To pay my underminers in their coin.
My nation was subjected to your lords:
It was the force of conquest; force with force
Is well ejected when the conquer'd can.
But I, a private person, whom my country
As a league-breaker gave up bound, presum'd
Single rebellion, and did hostile acts.
I was no private, but a person rais'd
With strength sufficient, and command from Heaven,
To free my country; if their servile minds
Me, their deliverer sent, would not receive,
But to their masters gave me up for nought,
The unworthier they; whence to this day they serve.
I was to do my part from Heaven assign'd,
And had perform'd it, if my known offence
Had not disabled me, not all your force:
These shifts refuted, answer thy appellant,
Though by his blindness maim'd for high attempts,
Who now defies thee thrice to single fight,
As a petty enterprise of small enforce.

Harapha. With thee! a man condemn'd, a slave inroll'd,
Due by the law to capital punishment!
To fight with thee no man of arms will deign.

Samson. Cam'st thou for this, vain boaster, to survey me,
To descant on my strength, and give thy verdict?
Come nearer; part not hence so slight inform'd;
But take good heed my hand survey not thee.

Harapha. O Baal-zebub! can my ears unus'd
Hear these dishonours, and not render death?

Samson. No man witholds thee, nothing from thy hand
Fear I incurable; bring up thy van,
My heels are fetter'd, but my fist is free.

Harapha. This insolence other kind of answer fits.

Samson. Go, baffled coward! lest I run upon thee
Though in these chains, bulk without spirit vast,
And with one buffet lay thy structure low,
Or swing thee in the air, then dash thee down
To the hazard of thy brains and shatter'd sides.

Harapha. By Astaroth, ere long thou shalt lament
These braveries, in irons loaden on thee. [*Exit.*]

Chorus. His giantship is gone somewhat crest-fallen,
Stalking with less unconscionable strides,
And lower looks, but in a sultry chase.

Samson. I dread him not, nor all his giant-brood,
Though Fame divulge him father of five sons,
All of gigantick size, Goliah chief.

Chorus. He will directly to the lords, I fear,

And with malicious counsel stir them up
Some way or other yet further to afflict thee.

Samson. He must allege some cause, and offer'd fight
Will not dare mention, lest a question rise
Whether he durst accept the offer or not;
And, that he durst not, plain enough appear'd.
Much more affliction than already felt
They cannot well impose, nor I sustain;
If they intend advantage of my labours,
The work of many hands, which earns my keeping
With no small profit daily to my owners.
But come what will, my deadliest foe will prove
My speediest friend, by death to rid me hence;
The worst that he can give, to me the best.
Yet so it may fall out, because their end
Is hate, not help to me, it may with mine
Draw their own ruin who attempt the deed.

Chorus. Oh how comely it is, and how reviving
To the spirits of just men long oppress'd!
When God into the hands of their deliverer
Puts invincible might
To quell the mighty of the earth, the oppressour,
The brute and boisterous force of violent men,
Hardy and industrious to support
Tyrannick power, but raging to pursue
The righteous and all such as honour truth;
He all their ammunition

And feats of war defeats,
With plain heroick magnitude of mind
And celestial vigour arm'd;
Their armouries and magazines contemns,
Renders them useless; while
With winged expedition,
Swift as the lightning glance he executes
His errand on the wicked, who, surpris'd,
Lose their defence, distracted and amaz'd.
  But patience is more oft the exercise
Of saints, the trial of their fortitude,
Making them each his own deliverer,
And victor over all
That tyranny or fortune can inflict.
Either of these is in thy lot,
Samson, with might endued
Above the sons of men; but sight bereav'd
May chance to number thee with those
Whom patience finally must crown.
  This idol's day hath been to thee no day of rest,
Labouring thy mind
More than the working day thy hands.
And yet perhaps more trouble is behind,
For I descry this way
Some other tending; in his hand
A scepter or quaint staff he bears,
Comes on amain, speed in his look.
By his habit I discern him now

A publick officer, and now at hand;
His message will be short and voluble.

Enter OFFICER.

Officer. Hebrews, the prisoner Samson here I seek.

Chorus. His manacles remark him, there he sits.

Officer. Samson, to thee our lords thus bid me say;
This day to Dagon is a solemn feast,
With sacrifices, triumph, pomp, and games:
Thy strength they know surpassing human rate,
And now some publick proof thereof require
To honour this great feast and great assembly;
Rise therefore with all speed, and come along,
Where I will see thee hearten'd and fresh clad,
To appear, as fits, before the illustrious lords.

Samson. Thou know'st I am an Hebrew, therefore tell them,
Our Law forbids at their religious rites
My presence; for that cause I cannot come.

Officer. This answer, be assur'd, will not content them.

Samson. Have they not sword-players, and every sort
Of gymnick artists, wrestlers, riders, runners,
Juglers, and dancers, anticks, mummers, mimicks,
But they must pick me out, with shackles tir'd,
And over-labour'd at their publick mill,
To make them sport with blind activity?

Do they not seek occasion of new quarrels
On my refusal to distress me more,
Or make a game of my calamities?
Return the way thou cam'st, I will not come.

Officer. Regard thyself; this will offend them highly.

Samson. Myself? my conscience, and internal peace.
Can they think me so broken, so debas'd
With corporal servitude, that my mind ever
Will condescend to such absurd commands?
Although their drudge, to be their fool or jester,
And in my midst of sorrow and heart-grief
To show them feats, and play before their God,
The worst of all indignities, yet on me
Join'd with extreme contempt? I will not come.

Officer. My message was impos'd on me with speed,
Brooks no delay; is this thy resolution?

Samson. So take it with what speed thy message needs.

Officer. I am sorry what this stoutness will produce. [*Exit.*]

Samson. Perhaps thou shalt have cause to sorrow indeed.

Chorus. Consider, Samson; matters now are strain'd
Up to the highth, whether to hold or break:

He's gone, and who knows how he may report
Thy words by adding fuel to the flame?
Expect another message more imperious,
More lordly thundering than thou well wilt bear.
Samson. Shall I abuse this consecrated gift
Of strength, again returning with my hair
After my great transgression, so requite
Favour renew'd, and add a greater sin
By prostituting holy things to idols?
A Nazarite in place abominable
Vaunting my strength in honour to their Dagon!
Besides, how vile, contemptible, ridiculous,
What act more execrably unclean, profane?
Chorus. Yet with this strength thou serv'st the Philistines,
Idolatrous, uncircumcis'd, unclean.
Samson. Not in their idol-worship, but by labour
Honest and lawful to deserve my food
Of those, who have me in their civil power.
Chorus. Where the heart joins not, outward acts defile not.
Samson. Where outward force constrains, the sentence holds.
But who constrains me to the temple of Dagon,
Not dragging? the Philistian lords command.
Commands are no constraints. If I obey them,
I do it freely, venturing to displease
God for the fear of Man, and Man prefer,

Set God behind: which in his jealousy
Shall never, unrepented, find forgiveness.
Yet that he may dispense with me, or thee,
Present in temples at idolatrous rites
For some important cause, thou need'st not doubt.

Chorus. How thou wilt here come off surmounts my reach.

Samson. Be of good courage; I begin to feel
Some rousing motions in me, which dispose
To something extraordinary my thoughts.
I with this messenger will go along,
Nothing to do, be sure, that may dishonour
Our Law, or stain my vow of Nazarite.
If there be aught of presage in the mind,
This day will be remarkable in my life
By some great act, or of my days the last.

Chorus. In time thou hast resolv'd, the man returns.

Officer. Samson, this second message from our lords
To thee I am bid say. Art thou our slave,
Our captive, at the publick mill our drudge
And dar'st thou at our sending and command
Dispute thy coming? come without delay;
Or we shall find such engines to assail
And hamper thee, as thou shalt come of force,
Though thou wert firmlier fasten'd than a rock.

Samson. I could be well content to try their art,

Which to no few of them would prove pernicious.
Yet, knowing their advantages too many,
Because they shall not trail me through their streets
Like a wild beast, I am content to go.
Masters' commands come with a power resistless
To such as owe them absolute subjection;
And for a life who will not change his purpose?
(So mutable are all the ways of men;)
Yet this be sure, in nothing to comply
Scandalous or forbidden in our Law.

Officer. I praise thy resolution: doff these links
By this compliance thou wilt win the lords
To favour, and perhaps to set thee free.

Samson. Brethren, farewell; your company along
I will not wish, lest it perhaps offend them
To see me girt with friends; and how the sight
Of me, as of a common enemy,
So dreaded once, may now exasperate them,
I know not: lords are lordliest in their wine;
And the well-feasted priest then soonest fir'd
With zeal, if aught religion seem concern'd;
No less the people, on their holy-days,
Impetuous, insolent, unquenchable:
Happen what may, of me expect to hear
Nothing dishonourable, impure, unworthy
Our God, our Law, my Nation, or myself,
The last of me or no I cannot warrant.

Chorus. Go, and the Holy one

Of Israel be thy guide
To what may serve his glory best, and spread his Name
Great among the Heathen round;
Send thee the Angel of thy birth, to stand
Fast by thy side, who from thy father's field
Rode up in flames after his message told
Of thy conception, and be now a shield
Of fire; that Spirit, that first rushed on thee
In the camp of Dan,
Be efficacious in thee now at need.
For never was from Heaven imparted
Measure of strength so great to mortal seed,
As in thy wonderous actions hath been seen.—
But wherefore comes old Manoah in such haste
With youthful steps? much livelier than ere while
He seems; supposing here to find his son,
Or of him bringing to us some glad news?

Enter MANOAH.

Manoah. Peace with you, Brethren; my inducement hither
Was not at present here to find my son,
By order of the lords now parted hence
To come and play before them at their feast.
I heard all as I came, the city rings,
And numbers thither flock: I had no will,
Lest I should see him forc'd to things unseemly.

But that, which mov'd my coming now, was chiefly
To give ye part with me what hope I have
With good success to work his liberty.
Chorus. That hope would much rejoice us to partake
With thee; say, reverend Sire, we thirst to hear.
Manoah. I have attempted one by one the lords
Either at home, or through the high street passing,
With supplication prone and father's tears,
To accept of ransom for my son their prisoner.
Some much averse I found and wonderous harsh,
Contemptuous, proud, set on revenge and spite;
That part most reverenc'd Dagon and his priests:
Others more moderate seeming, but their aim
Private reward, for which both God and State
They easily would set to sale: a third
More generous far and civil, who confess'd
They had enough reveng'd; having reduc'd
Their foe to misery beneath their fears,
The rest was magnanimity to remit,
If some convenient ransom were propos'd.
What noise or shout was that? it tore the sky.
Chorus. Doubtless the people shouting to behold
Their once great dread, captive, and blind before them,
Or at some proof of strength before them shown.
Manoah. His ransom, if my whole inheritance
May compass it, shall willingly be paid

And number'd down: much rather I shall choose
To live the poorest in my tribe, than richest,
And he in that calamitous prison left.
No, I am fix'd not to part hence without him,
For his redemption all my patrimony
If need be, I am ready to forego
And quit: not wanting him, I shall want nothing.

Chorus. Fathers are wont to lay up for their sons,
Thou for thy son art bent to lay out all;
Sons wont to nurse their parents in old age,
Thou in old age car'st how to nurse thy son,
Made older than thy age through eye-sight lost.

Manoah. It shall be my delight to tend his eyes,
And view him sitting in the house, ennobled
With all those high exploits by him achiev'd,
And on his shoulders waving down those locks
That of a nation arm'd the strength contain'd:
And I persuade me, God hath not permitted
His strength again to grow up with his hair,
Garrison'd round about him like a camp
Of faithful soldiery, were not his purpose
To use him further yet in some great service;
Not to sit idle with so great a gift
Useless, and thence ridiculous about him.
And since his strength with eye-sight was not lost,
God will restore him eye-sight to his strength.

Chorus. Thy hopes are not ill founded, nor seem vain

Of his delivery, and thy joy thereon
Conceiv'd, agreeable to a father's love,
In both which we, as next, participate.
Manoah. I know your friendly minds and—O
what noise!—
Mercy of Heaven! what hideous noise was that?
Horribly loud, unlike the former shout.
Chorus. Noise call you it, or universal groan,
As if the whole inhabitation perish'd!
Blood, death, and deathful deeds, are in that noise,
Ruin, destruction at the utmost point.
Manoah. Of ruin indeed methought I heard the
noise:
Oh! it continues, they have slain my son.
Chorus. Thy son is rather slaying them; that outcry
From slaughter of one foe could not ascend.
Manoah. Some dismal accident it needs must be,
What shall we do, stay here or run and see?
Chorus. Best keep together here, lest, running
thither,
We unawares run into danger's mouth.
This evil on the Philistines is fallen;
From whom could else a general cry be heard;
The sufferers then will scarce molest us here;
From other hands we need not much to fear.
What if, his eye-sight (for to Israel's God
Nothing is hard) by miracle restor'd,

He now be dealing dole among his foes,
And over heaps of slaughter'd walk his way?

Manoah. That were a joy presumptuous to be thought.

Chorus. Yet God hath wrought things as incredible
For his people of old: what hinders now?

Manoah. He can, I know, but doubt to think he will;
Yet hope would fain subscribe, and tempts belief.
A little stay will bring some notice hither.

Chorus. Of good or bad so great, of bad the sooner;
For evil news rides post, while good news bates.
And to our wish I see one hither speeding,
An Hebrew, as I guess, and of our tribe.

Enter MESSENGER.

Messenger. O whither shall I run, or which way fly
The sight of this so horrid spectacle,
Which erst my eyes beheld, and yet behold?
For dire imagination still pursues me.
But providence or instinct of nature seems,
Or reason though disturb'd, and scarce consulted,
To have guided me aright, I know not how,
To thee first, reverend Manoah, and to these
My countrymen, whom here I knew remaining,

As at some distance from the place of horrour,
So in the sad event too much concern'd.
Manoah. The accident was loud, and here before thee
With rueful cry, yet what it was we hear not;
No preface needs, thou seest we long to know.
Messenger. It would burst forth, but I recover breath
And sense distract, to know well what I utter.
Manoah. Tell us the sum, the circumstance defer.
Messenger. Gaza yet stands, but all her sons are fallen,
All in a moment overwhelm'd and fallen.
Manoah. Sad, but thou know'st to Israelites not saddest
The desolation of a hostile city.
Messenger. Feed on that first; there may in grief be surfeit.
Manoah. Relate by whom.
Messinger. By Samson.
Manoah. That still lessens
The sorrow, and converts it nigh to joy.
Messenger. Ah! Manoah, I refrain too suddenly
To utter what will come at last too soon;
Lest evil tidings with too rude irruption
Hitting thy aged ear should pierce too deep.

Manoah. Suspense in news is torture, speak them out.

Messenger. Take then the worst in brief, Samson is dead.

Manoah. The worst indeed! O all my hopes defeated
To free him hence! but death, who sets all free,
Hath paid his ransom now and full discharge.
What windy joy this day had I conceiv'd
Hopeful of his delivery, which now proves
Abortive as the first-born bloom of spring
Nipt with the lagging rear of winter's frost!
Yet ere I give the reins to grief, say first,
How died he; death to life is crown or shame.
All by him fell, thou say'st; by whom fell he?
What glorious hand gave Samson his death's wound?

Messenger. Unwounded of his enemies he fell.

Manoah. Wearied with slaughter then, or how? explain.

Messenger. By his own hands.

Manoah. Self-violence? what cause
Brought him so soon at variance with himself
Among his foes?

Messenger. Inevitable cause
At once both to destroy, and be destroy'd;
The edifice, where all were met to see him,
Upon their heads and on his own he pull'd.

Manoah. O lastly over-strong against thyself!
A dreadful way thou took'st to thy revenge.

More than enough we know; but while things yet
Are in confusion, give us, if thou canst,
Eye-witness of what first or last was done,
Relation more particular and distinct.

Messenger. Occasions drew me early to this city,
And, as the gates I enter'd with sun-rise,
The morning trumpets festival proclaim'd
Through each high street: little I had despatch'd
When all abroad was rumour'd that this day
Samson should be brought forth, to show the people
Proof of his mighty strength in feats and games;
I sorrow'd at his captive state, but minded
Not to be absent at that spectacle.
The building was a spacious theatre
Half-round, on two main pillars vaulted high,
With seats where all the lords, and each degree
Of sort, might sit in order to behold;
The other side was open, where the throng
On banks and scaffolds under sky might stand;
I among these aloof obscurely stood.
The feast and noon grew high, and sacrifice
Had fill'd their hearts with mirth, high cheer, and wine,
When to their sports they turn'd. Immediately
Was Samson as a publick servant brought,
In their state livery clad; before him pipes
And timbrels, on each side went armed guards,
Both horse and foot, before him and behind

Archers, and slingers, cataphracts and spears.
At sight of him the people with a shout
Rifted the air, clamouring their God with praise,
Who had made their dreadful enemy their thrall.
He patient, but undaunted, where they led him,
Came to the place; and what was set before him,
Which without help of eye might be assay'd,
To heave, pull, draw, or break, he still perform'd
All with incredible, stupendous force;
None daring to appear antagonist.
At length for intermission sake they led him
Between the pillars; he his guide requested
(For so from such as nearer stood we heard)
As over-tir'd to let him lean a while
With both his arms on those two massy pillars,
That to the arched roof gave main support.
He, unsuspicious, led him; which when Samson
Felt in his arms, with head a while inclin'd,
And eyes fast fix'd he stood, as one who pray'd,
Or some great matter in his mind revolv'd:
At last with head erect thus cried aloud;
"Hitherto, Lords, what your commands impos'd
I have perform'd, as reason was, obeying,
Not without wonder or delight beheld:
Now of my own accord such other trial
I mean to show you of my strength, yet greater,
As with amaze shall strike all who behold."
This utter'd, straining all his nerves be bow'd,

As with the force of winds and waters pent,
When mountains tremble, those two massy pillars
With horrible convulsion to and fro
He tugg'd, he shook, till down they came and drew
The whole roof after them, with burst of thunder
Upon the heads of all who sat beneath,
Lords, ladies, captains, counsellors, or priests,
Their choice nobility and flower, not only
Of this but each Philistian city round,
Met from all parts to solemnize this feast.
Samson, with these immix'd, inevitably
Pull'd down the same destruction on himself;
The vulgar only 'scap'd who stood without.

Chorus. O dearly-bought revenge, yet glorious!
Living or dying thou hast fulfill'd
The work for which thou wast foretold
To Israel, and now ly'st victorious
Among thy slain self-kill'd,
Not willingly, but tangled in the fold
Of dire necessity, whose law in death conjoin'd
Thee with thy slaughter'd foes, in number more
Than all thy life hath slain before.

1 *Semichor.* While their hearts were jocund and sublime,
Drunk with idolatry, drunk with wine,
And fat regorg'd of bulls and goats,
Chaunting their idol, and preferring
Before our living Dread who dwells

In Silo, his bright sanctuary:
Among them he a Spirit of phrenzy sent,
Who hurt their minds,
And urg'd them on with mad desire
To call in haste for their destroyer;
They, only set on sport and play,
Unweetingly importun'd
Their own destruction to come speedy upon them.
So fond are mortal men,
Fall'n into wrath divine,
As their own ruin on themselves to invite,
Insensate left, or to sense reprobate,
And with blindness internal struck.
2 *Semichor.* But he, though blind of sight,
Despis'd and thought extinguish'd quite,
With inward eyes illuminated,
His fiery virtue rous'd
From under ashes into sudden flame.
And as an evening dragon came,
Assailant on the perched roosts
And nests in order rang'd
Of tame villatick fowl; but as an eagle
His cloudless thunder bolted on their heads.
So Virtue, given for lost,
Depress'd, and overthrown, as seem'd,
Like that self-begotten bird
In the Arabian woods embost,
That no second knows nor third,

And lay ere while a holocaust,
From out her ashy womb now teem'd,
Revives, reflourishes, then vigorous most
When most unactive deem'd;
And, though her body die, her fame survives
A secular bird ages of lives.

Manoah. Come, come; no time for lamentation now,
Nor much more cause; Samson hath quit himself
Like Samson, and heroickly hath finish'd
A life heroick, on his enemies
Fully reveng'd, and left them years of mourning,
And lamentation to the sons of Caphtor
Through all Philistian bounds; to Israel
Honour hath left, and freedom, let but them
Find courage to lay hold on this occasion;
To himself and father's house eternal fame;
And which is best and happiest yet, all this
With God not parted from him, as was fear'd,
But favouring and assisting to the end.
Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail
Or knock the breast; no weakness, no contempt,
Dispraise, or blame; nothing but well and fair,
And what may quiet us in a death so noble.
Let us go find the body where it lies
Soak'd in his enemies blood; and from the stream
With lavers pure, and cleansing herbs, wash off

The clotted gore. I, with what speed the while,
(Gaza is not in plight to say us nay,)
Will send for all my kindred, all my friends,
To fetch him hence, and solemnly attend
With silent obsequy, and funeral train,
Home to his father's house: there will I build him
A monument, and plant it round with shade
Of laurel ever green, and branching palm,
With all his trophies hung, and acts inroll'd
In copious legend, or sweet lyrick song.
Thither shall all the valiant youth resort,
And from his memory inflame their breasts
To matchless valour, and adventures high:
The virgins also shall, on feastful days,
Visit his tomb with flowers; only bewailing
His lot unfortunate in nuptial choice,
From whence captivity and loss of eyes.

Chorus. All is best, though we oft doubt
What the unsearchable dispose
Of highest Wisdom brings about,
And ever best found in the close.
Oft he seems to hide his face,
But unexpectedly returns,
And to his faithful champion hath in place
Bore witness gloriously; whence Gaza mourns,
And all that band them to resist
His uncontrollable intent;

His servants he with new acquist
Of true experience, from this great event
With peace and consolation hath dismist,
And calm of mind all passion spent.

LYCIDAS:

A

MONODY.

LYCIDAS.

In this MONODY, *the author bewails a learned friend, unfortunately drowned in his passage from Chester on the Irish seas,* 1637. *And by occasion foretells the ruin of our corrupted clergy, then in their highth.*

YET once more, O ye laurels, and once more
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never-sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude;
And, with forc'd fingers rude,
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year:
Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear,
Compels me to disturb your season due:
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer:
Who would not sing for Lycidas? He knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
He must not float upon his watery bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.

Begin then, Sisters of the sacred well,
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring;
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
Hence with denial vain, and coy excuse:
So may some gentle Muse
With lucky words favour my destin'd urn;
And, as he passes, turn,
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud.
For we were nurs'd upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flock by fountain, shade, and rill.
Together both, ere the high lawns appear'd
Under the opening eye-lids of the morn,
We drove afield, and both together heard
What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn,
Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the star, that rose, at evening, bright,
Toward heaven's descent had slop'd his westering wheel.
Mean while the rural ditties were not mute,
Temper'd to the oaten flute:
Rough Satyrs danc'd, and Fauns with cloven heel
From the glad sound would not be absent long:
And old Damœtas lov'd to hear our song.
But, O the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone, and never must return!
Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods, and desart caves
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown:
And all their echoes mourn:

The willows, and the hazel copses green,
Shall now no more be seen
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.
As killing as the canker to the rose,
Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
Or frost to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear,
When first the white-thorn blows;
Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.
Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep
Clos'd o'er the head of your lov'd Lycidas?
For neither were ye playing on the steep,
Where your old Bards, the famous Druids, lie,
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream:
Ay me! I fondly dream!
Had ye been there—for what could that have done?
What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,
Whom universal Nature did lament,
When, by the rout that made the hideous roar,
His goary visage down the stream was sent,
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?
Alas! what boots it with incessant care
To tend the homely, slighted, shepherd's trade,
And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?
Were it not better done, as others use,
To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,

Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?
Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble mind)
To scorn delights, and live laborious days;
But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with the abhorred shears,
And slits the thin-spun life. "But not the praise,"
Phœbus replied, and touch'd my trembling ears;
"Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glistering foil
Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies;
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,
And perfect witness of all judging Jove;
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in heaven expect thy meed."
O fountain Arethuse, and thou honour'd flood,
Smooth-sliding Mincius, crown'd with vocal reeds!
That strain I heard was of a higher mood:
But now my oat proceeds,
And listens to the herald of the sea
That came in Neptune's plea;
He ask'd the waves, and ask'd the felon winds,
What hard mishap hath doom'd this gentle swain?
And question'd every gust of rugged wings
That blows from off each beaked promontory:
They knew not of his story;
And sage Hippotades their answer brings,

That not a blast was from his dungeon stray'd;
The air was calm, and on the level brine
Sleek Panope with all her sisters play'd.
It was the fatal and perfidious bark,
Built in the eclipse, and rigg'd with curses dark,
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.
Next Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
Like to that sanguine flower inscrib'd with woe.
"Ah! Who hath reft (quoth he) my dearest pledge?"
Last came, and last did go,
The pilot of the Galilean lake;
Two massy keys he bore of metals twain,
(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain,)
He shook his miter'd locks, and stern bespake:
"How well could I have spar'd for thee young swain,
Enow of such, as for their bellies' sake
Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold?
Of other care they little reckoning make,
Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,
And shove away the worthy bidden guest;
Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold
A sheep-hook, or have learn'd aught else the least
That to the faithful herdman's art belongs!

What recks it them? What need they? They are
sped;
And, when they list, their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw;
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed
But, swoln with wind and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread:
Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said:
But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more."
Return, Alpheus, the dread voice is past,
That shrunk thy streams; return, Sicilian Muse,
And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
Their bells, and flowerets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart-star sparely looks;
Throw hither all your quaint enamell'd eyes,
That on the green turf suck the honied showers,
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freak'd with jet,
The glowing violet,
The musk-rose, and the well-attir'd woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears:

Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And daffadillies fill their cups with tears,
To strew the laureat herse where Lycid lies.
For, so to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise;
Ay me! Whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurl'd,
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps, under the whelming tide,
Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;
Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
Where the great Vision of the guarded Mount
Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold:
Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt with ruth:
And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.

Weep no more, woful Shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas your sorrow is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor;
So sinks the day star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high
Through the dear might of him that walk'd the waves;
Where, other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,

And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the saints above,
In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
That sing, and, singing, in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more:
Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore,
In thy large recompence, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.

Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and rills,
While the still morn went out with sandals gray;
He touch'd the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Dorick lay:
And now the sun had stretch'd out all the hills,
And now was dropt into the western bay;
At last he rose, and twitch'd his mantle blue:
To morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new. 193

L'ALLEGRO.

L'ALLEGRO.

HENCE, loathed Melancholy,
Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born,
In Stygian cave forlorn,
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy!
Find out some uncouth cell,
Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night-raven sings;
There under ebon shades, and low-brow'd rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,
In dark Cimmerian desart ever dwell.
But come, thou Goddess fair and free,
In Heaven yclep'd Euphrosyne,

And by Men, heart-easing Mirth;
Whom lovely Venus, at a birth,
With two sister Graces more,
To ivy-crowned Bacchus bore:
Or whether (as some sager sing)
The frolick wind, that breathes the spring,
Zephyr, with Aurora playing,
As he met her once a-Maying;
There on beds of violets blue,
And fresh-blown roses wash'd in dew,
Fill'd her with thee a daughter fair,
So buxom, blythe, and debonair.
Haste thee, Nymph, and bring with thee
Jest, and youthful Jollity,
Quips, and Cranks, and wanton Wiles,
Nods, and Becks, and wreathed Smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides.
Come, and trip it, as you go,
On the light fantastick toe;
And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain-nymph, sweet Liberty;
And, if I give thee honour due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
To live with her, and live with thee,
In unreproved pleasures free;

To hear the lark begin his flight,
And singing startle the dull night,
From his watch-tower in the skies,
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
Then to come, in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good morrow,
Through the sweet-briar, or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine:
While the cock, with lively din,
Scatters the rear of Darkness thin.
And to the stack, or the barn-door,
Stoutly struts his dames before:
Oft listening how the hounds and horn
Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,
From the side of some hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill:
Some time walking, not unseen,
By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green,
Right against the eastern gate
Where the great sun begins his state,
Rob'd in flames, and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight;
While the plowman, near at hand,
Whistles o'er the furrow'd land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his sithe,
And every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.

Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
Whilst the landskip round it measures;
Russet lawns, and fallows gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray,
Mountains, on whose barren breast,
The labouring clouds do often rest;
Meadows trim with daisies pide,
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide:
Towers and battlements it sees
Bosom'd high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps some Beauty lies,
The Cynosure of neighbouring eyes.
Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes,
From betwixt two aged oaks,
Where Corydon and Thyrsis, met,
Are at their savoury dinner set
Of herbs, and other country messes,
Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses;
And then in haste her bower she leaves,
With Thestylis to bind the sheaves;
Or, if the earlier season lead,
To the tann'd haycock in the mead.
Sometimes with secure delight
The upland hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecks sound
To many a youth, and many a maid,
Dancing in the chequer'd shade;

And young and old come forth to play
On a sun-shine holy-day,
Till the live-long day-light fail:
Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
With stories told of many a feat,
How faery Mab the junkets eat;
She was pinch'd, and pull'd, she sed;
And, he, by friars lantern led,
Tells how the drudging Goblin swet,
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail hath thresh'd the corn,
That ten day-labourers could not end;
Then lies him down the lubbar fiend,
And, stretch'd out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength;
And crop-full out of doors he flings,
Ere the first cock his matin rings.
Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
By whispering winds soon lull'd asleep.
Tower'd cities please us then,
And the busy hum of men,
Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
In weeds of peace, high triumphs hold,
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit, or arms, while both contend
To win her grace, whom all commend.

There let Hymen oft appear
In saffron robe, with taper clear,
And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
With mask, and antique pageantry;
Such sights as youthful poets dream
On summer eves by haunted stream.
Then to the well-trod stage anon,
If Jonson's learned sock be on,
Or sweetest Shakspeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild.
And ever, against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal verse;
Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
In notes, with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton heed and giddy cunning;
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony;
That Orpheus' self may heave his head
From golden slumber on a bed
Of heap'd Elysian flowers, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto, to have quite set free
His half-regain'd Eurydice.
These delights if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live. 152

IL PENSEROSO.

IL PENSEROSO.

HENCE, vain deluding Joys,
The brood of Folly without father bred!
How little you bested,
Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys!
Dwell in some idle brain,
And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
As thick and numberless
As the gay motes that people the sun-beams;
Or likest hovering dreams,
The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train.
But hail, thou Goddess, sage and holy,
Hail, divinest Melancholy!
Whose saintly visage is too bright
To hit the sense of human sight,

And therefore to our weaker view
O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue;
Black, but such as in esteem
Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,
Or that starr'd Ethiop queen that strove
To set her beauty's praise above
The Sea-Nymphs, and their powers offended:
Yet thou art higher far descended:
Thee bright-hair'd Vesta, long of yore,
To solitary Saturn bore;
His daughter she; in Saturn's reign,
Such mixture was not held a stain:
Oft in glimmering bowers and glades
He met her, and in secret shades
Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
Whilst yet there was no fear of Jove.
Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,
Sober, stedfast, and demure,
All in a robe of darkest grain,
Flowing with majestick train,
And sable stole of Cyprus lawn,
Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
Come, but keep thy wonted state,
With even step, and musing gait;
And looks commércing with the skies,
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:
There, held in holy passion still,
Forget thyself to marble, till

With a sad leaden downward cast
Thou fix them on the earth as fast:
And join with thee calm Peace, and Quiet,
Spare Fast, that oft with Gods doth diet,
And hears the Muses in a ring
Aye round about Jove's altar sing:
And add to these retired Leisure,
That in trim gardens takes his pleasure:
But first, and chiefest, with thee bring,
Him that yon soars on golden wing,
Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne,
The Cherub Contemplation;
And the mute Silence hist along,
'Less Philomel will deign a song,
In her sweetest saddest plight,
Smoothing the rugged brow of night,
While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke,
Gently o'er the accustom'd oak:
Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy!
Thee, chauntress, oft, the woods among,
I woo, to hear thy even-song;
And, missing thee, I walk unseen
On the dry smooth-shaven green,
To behold the wandering moon,
Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that had been led astray
Through the heaven's wide pathless way;

And oft, as if her head she bow'd,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud:
Oft, on a plat of rising ground,
I hear the far-off Curfeu sound,
Over some wide-water'd shore,
Swinging slow with sullen roar:
Or, if the air will not permit,
Some still removed place will fit;
Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom;
Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the belman's drowsy charm,
To bless the doors from nightly harm:
Or let my lamp at midnight hour,
Be seen in some high lonely tower,
Where I may oft out-watch the Bear,
With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere
The spirit of Plato, to unfold
What worlds or what vast regions hold
The immortal mind, that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshly nook:
And of those Demons that are found
In fire, air, flood, or under ground,
Whose power hath a true consent
With planet, or with element.
Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
In scepter'd pall come sweeping by,

Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
Or the tale of Troy divine;
Or what (though rare) of later age
Ennobled hath the buskin'd stage.
But, O sad Virgin, that thy power
Might raise Musæus from his bower!
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing
Such notes, as, warbled to the string,
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And made Hell grant what love did seek!
Or call up him that left half told
The story of Cambuscan bold,
Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
And who had Canace to wife,
That own'd the virtuous ring and glass;
And of the wondrous horse of brass,
On which the Tartar king did ride:
And if aught else great bards beside
In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
Of turneys, and of trophies hung,
Of forests, and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.
Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career,
Till civil-suited Morn appear,
Not trick'd and frounc'd as she was wont
With the Attick boy to hunt,
But kerchieft in a comely cloud,
While rocking winds are piping loud;

Or usher'd with a shower still,
When the gust hath blown his fill,
Ending on the russling leaves,
With minute drops from off the eaves.
And, when the sun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me, Goddess, bring
To arched walks of twilight groves,
And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
Of pine, or monumental oak,
Where the rude axe, with heaved stroke,
Was never heard the Nymphs to daunt,
Or fright them from their hallow'd haunt.
There in close covert by some brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from day's garish eye,
While the bee with honied thigh,
That at her flowery work doth sing,
And the waters murmuring,
With such consort as they keep,
Entice the dewy-feather'd Sleep;
And let some strange mysterious Dream
Wave at his wings in aery stream
Of livelier portraiture display'd,
Softly on my eye-lids laid.
And, as I wake, sweet musick breathe
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by some Spirit to mortals good,
Or the unseen Genius of the wood.

But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloysters pale,
And love the high-embowed roof,
With antick pillars massy proof,
And storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light:
There let the pealing organ blow,
To the full-voic'd quire below,
In service high, and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all heaven before mine eyes.
And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and mossy cell,
Where I may sit and rightly spell
Of every star that heaven doth shew,
And every herb that sips the dew;
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetick strain.
These pleasures, Melancholy, give,
And I with thee will choose to live. 176

ARCADES:

PART OF A

MASK,

PRESENTED AT HAREFIELD,

BEFORE

ALICE, COUNTESS DOWAGER OF DERBY.

ARCADES.

Part of an Entertainment presented to the Countess Dowager of Derby at Harefield, by some noble persons of her family; who appear on the scene in pastoral habit, moving toward the seat of state, with this Song.

I. SONG.

Look, Nymphs, and Shepherds, look,
What sudden blaze of majesty
Is that which we from hence descry,
Too divine to be mistook:
This, this is she
To whom our vows and wishes bend;
Here our solemn search hath end.

Fame, that, her high worth to raise,
Seem'd erst so lavish and profuse,
We may justly now accuse
Of detraction from her praise;
Less than half we find exprest,
Envy bid conceal the rest.

Mark, what radiant state she spreads,
In circle round her shining throne,
Shooting her beams like silver threads;
This, this is she alone,
Sitting like a Goddess bright,
In the center of her light.

Might she the wise Latona be,
Or the tower'd Cybele
Mother of a hundred Gods?
Juno dares not give her odds;
Who had thought this clime had held
A deity so unparallell'd?

As they come forward, the Genius *of the wood appears, and turning toward them, speaks.*

Genius. Stay, gentle Swains; for, though in this disguise,
I see bright honour sparkle through your eyes;
Of famous Arcady ye are, and sprung
Of that renowned flood, so often sung,
Divine Alphéus, who by secret sluce
Stole under seas to meet his Arethuse;
And ye, the breathing roses of the wood,
Fair silver-buskin'd Nymphs, as great and good;
I know, this quest of yours, and free intent,
Was all in honour and devotion meant
To the great mistress of yon princely shrine,
Whom with low reverence I adore as mine;

And, with all helpful service, will comply
To further this night's glad solemnity;
And lead ye, where ye may more near behold
What shallow-searching Fame hath left untold;
Which I full oft, amidst these shades alone,
Have sat to wonder at, and gaze upon:
For know, by lot from Jove I am the Power
Of this fair wood, and live in oaken bower,
To nurse the saplings tall, and curl the grove
With ringlets quaint, and wanton windings wove.
And all my plants I save from nightly ill
Of noisome winds, and blasting vapours chill:
And from the boughs brush off the evil dew,
And heal the harms of thwarting thunder blue,
Or what the cross dire-looking planet smites,
Or hurtful worm with canker'd venom bites.
When evening gray doth rise, I fetch my round
Over the mount, and all this hallow'd ground;
And early, ere the odorous breath of morn
Awakes the slumbering leaves, or tassel'd horn
Shakes the high thicket, haste I all about,
Number my ranks, and visit every sprout
With puissant words, and murmurs made to bless.
But else in deep of night, when drowsiness
Hath lock'd up mortal sense, then listen I
To the celestial Syrens' harmony,
That sit upon the nine infolded spheres,
And sing to those that hold the vital shears,

And turn the adamantine spindle round,
On which the fate of Gods and Men is wound.
Such sweet compulsion doth in musick lie,
To lull the daughters of Necessity,
And keep unsteady Nature to her law,
And the low world in measur'd motion draw
After the heavenly tune, which none can hear
Of human mould, with gross unpurged ear;
And yet such musick worthiest were to blaze
The peerless highth of her immortal praise,
Whose lustre leads us, and for her most fit,
If my inferiour hand or voice could hit
Inimitable sounds: yet, as we go,
Whate'er the skill of lesser Gods can show,
I will assay, her worth to celebrate,
And so attend ye toward her glittering state;
Where ye may all, that are of noble stem,
Approach, and kiss her sacred vesture's hem.

II. SONG.

O'ER the smooth enamell'd green
Where no print of step hath been,
Follow me, as I sing
And touch the warbled string,
Under the shady roof
Of branching elm star-proof.
Follow me;

I will bring you where she sits,
Cold in splendour as befits
Her deity.
Such a rural Queen
All Arcadia hath not seen.

III. SONG.

Nymphs and Shepherds, dance no more
By sandy Ladon's lillied banks;
On old Lycæus, or Cyllene hoar.
Trip no more in twilight ranks;
Though Erymanth your loss deplore,
A better soil shall give ye thanks.
From the stony Mænalus
Bring your flocks, and live with us;
Here ye shall have greater grace,
To serve the Lady of this place.
Through Syrinx your Pan's mistress were,
Yet Syrinx well might wait on her.
Such a rural Queen
All Arcadia hath not seen.

COMUS:

A

MASK,

PRESENTED AT LUDLOW CASTLE, 1634.

BEFORE

JOHN, EARL OF BRIDGEWATER,

THEN PRESIDENT OF WALES.

THE PERSONS.

THE ATTENDANT SPIRIT, *afterwards in the habit of* THYRSIS.
COMUS, *with his Crew.*
THE LADY.
FIRST BROTHER.
SECOND BROTHER.
SABRINA, *the Nymph.*

The chief Persons, who presented, were

The Lord Brackley.
Mr. Thomas Egerton, his br other
The Lady Alice Egerton.

COMUS.

THE FIRST SCENE DISCOVERS A WILD WOOD.

The Attendant Spirit descends *or* enters.

Before the starry threshold of Jove's court
My mansion is, where those immortal shapes
Of bright aëreal spirits live inspher'd
In regions mild of calm and serene air,
Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot,
Which men call Earth; and, with low-thoughted care
Confin'd and pester'd in this pin-fold here,
Strive to keep up a frail and feverish being,
Unmindful of the crown, that Virtue gives,
After this mortal change, to her true servants,
Amongst the enthron'd Gods on sainted seats.
Yet some there be, that by due steps aspire
To lay their just hands on that golden key,

That opes the palace of Eternity:
To such my errand is; and, but for such,
I would not soil these pure ambrosial weeds
With the rank vapours of this sin-worn mould.
But to my task! Neptune, besides the sway
Of every salt flood, and each ebbing stream,
Took in by lot 'twixt high and nether Jove
Imperial rule of all the sea-girt isles,
That, like to rich and various gems, inlay
The unadorned bosom of the deep:
Which he, to grace his tributary Gods,
By course commits to several government,
And gives them leave to wear their sapphire crowns,
And wield their little tridents: But this Isle,
The greatest and the best of all the main,
He quarters to his blue-hair'd Deities;
And all this tract that fronts the falling sun
A noble Peer of mickle trust and power
Has in his charge, with temper'd awe to guide
An old and haughty nation, proud in arms:
Where his fair off-spring, nurs'd in princely lore,
Are coming to attend their father's state,
And new-entrusted scepter: but their way
Lies through the perplex'd paths of this drear wood,
The nodding horrour of whose shady brows
Threats the forlorn and wandering passenger;
And here their tender age might suffer peril,
But that by quick command from sovran Jove

I was dispatch'd for their defence and guard:
And listen why; for I will tell you now
What never yet was heard in tale or song,
From old or modern bard, in hall or bower.
Bacchus, that first from out the purple grape
Crush'd the sweet poison of misused wine,
After the Tuscan mariners transform'd,
Coasting the Tyrrhene shore, as the winds listed,
On Circe's island fell: (Who knows not Circe,
The daughter of the Sun, whose charmed cup
Whoever tasted, lost his upright shape,
And downward fell into a groveling swine?)
This Nymph, that gaz'd upon his clustering locks
With ivy berries wreath'd, and his blithe youth,
Had by him, ere he parted thence, a son
Much like his father, but his mother more,
Whom therefore she brought up, and Comus nam'd:
Who, ripe and frolick of his full grown age,
Roving the Celtick and Iberian fields,
At last betakes him to this ominous wood;
And, in thick shelter of black shades imbower'd,
Excels his mother at her mighty art,
Offering to every weary traveller
His orient liquor in a crystal glass,
To quench the drouth of Phœbus; which as they taste,
(For most do taste through fond intemperate thirst,)
Soon as the potion works, their human countenance,

The express resemblance of the Gods, is chang'd
Into some brutish form of wolf, or bear,
Or ounce, or tiger, hog, or bearded goat,
All other parts remaining as they were;
And they, so perfect is their misery,
Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,
But boast themselves more comely than before;
And all their friends and native home forget,
To roll with pleasure in a sensual stye.
Therefore when any, favour'd of high Jove,
Chances to pass through this adventurous glade,
Swift as the sparkle of a glancing star
I shoot from heaven, to give him safe convoy,
As now I do: But first I must put off
These my sky-robes spun out of Iris' woof,
And take the weeds and likeness of a swain
That to the service of this house belongs,
Who with his soft pipe, and smooth-dittied song,
Well knows to still the wild winds when they roar,
And hush the waving woods; nor of less faith,
And in this office of his mountain watch
Likeliest, and nearest to the present aid
Of this occasion. But I hear the tread
Of hateful steps; I must be viewless now.

COMUS *enters with a charming-rod in one hand, his glass in the other; with him a rout of monsters, headed like sundry sorts of wild beasts, but otherwise like men and women, their apparel glistering; they come in making a riotous and unruly noise, with torches in their hands.*

Comus.

The star, that bids the shepherd fold,
Now the top of heaven doth hold;
And the gilded car of day
His glowing axle doth allay
In the steep Atlantick stream;
And the slope sun his upward beam
Shoots against the dusky pole,
Pacing toward the other goal
Of his chamber in the East.
Mean while welcome Joy, and Feast,
Midnight Shout, and Revelry,
Tipsy Dance, and Jollity.
Braid your locks with rosy twine,
Dropping odours, dropping wine.
Rigour now is gone to bed,
And Advice with scrupulous head.
Strict Age and sour Severity,
With their grave saws, in slumber lie.
We, that are of purer fire,
Imitate the starry quire,

Who, in their nightly watchful spheres,
Lead in swift round the months and years.
The sounds and seas, with all their finny drove,
Now to the moon in wavering morrice move;
And, on the tawny sands and shelves,
Trip the pert faeries and the dapper elves,
By dimpled brook and fountain brim,
The Wood-Nymphs, deck'd with daisies trim,
Their merry wakes and pastimes keep;
What hath night to do with sleep?
Night hath better sweets to prove;
Venus now wakes, and wakens Love.
Come, let us our rights begin;
'Tis only day-light that makes sin,
Which these dun shades will ne'er report.—
Hail, Goddess of noctural sport,
Dark-veil'd Cotytto! to whom the secret flame
Of midnight torches burns; mysterious dame,
That ne'er art call'd, but when the dragon womb
Of Stygian darkness spets her thickest gloom,
And makes one blot of all the air;
Stay thy cloudy ebon chair,
Wherein thou rid'st with Hecat', and befriend
Us thy vow'd priests, till utmost end
Of all thy dues be done, and none left out;
Ere the blabbing eastern scout,
The nice morn, on the Indian steep
From her cabin'd loop-hole peep,

And to the tell-tale sun descry
Our conceal'd solemnity.—
Come, knit hands, and beat the ground
In a light fantastick round.

THE MEASURE.

Break off, break off, I feel the different pace
Of some chaste footing near about this ground.
Run to your shrouds, within these brakes and trees
Our number may affright: Some virgin sure
(For so I can distinguish by mine art)
Benighted in these woods. Now to my charms,
And to my wily trains! I shall ere long
Be well-stock'd with as fair a herd as graz'd
About my mother Circe. Thus I hurl
My dazzling spells into the spungy air,
Of power to cheat the eye with blear illusion,
And give it false presentments, lest the place
And my quaint habits breed astonishment,
And put the damsel to suspicious flight;
Which must not be, for that's against my course:
I, under fair pretence of friendly ends,
And well-plac'd words of glozing courtesy
Baited with reasons not unplausible,
Wind me into the easy-hearted man,
And hug him into snares. When once her eye
Hath met the virtue of this magick dust,
I shall appear some harmless villager,

Whom thrift keeps up about his country gear.
But here she comes; I fairly step aside,
And hearken, if I may, her business here.

The LADY *enters.*

This way the noise was, if mine ear be true,
My best guide now: Methought it was the sound
Of riot, and ill-manag'd merriment,
Such as the jocund flute, or gamesome pipe,
Stirs up among the loose unletter'd hinds;
When for their teeming flocks, and granges full,
In wanton dance they praise the bounteous Pan,
And thank the Gods amiss. I should be loth
To meet the rudeness, and swill'd insolence,
Of such late wassailers; yet O! where else
Shall I inform my unacquainted feet
In the blind mazes of this tangled wood?
My brothers, when they saw me wearied out
With this long way, resolving here to lodge
Under the spreading favour of these pines,
Stept, as they said, to the next thicket side,
To bring me berries, or such cooling fruit
As the kind hospitable woods provide.
They left me then, when the gray-hooded Even,
Like a sad votarist in palmer's weed,
Rose from the hindmost wheels of Phœbus' wain.
But where they are, and why they came not back,
Is now the labour of my thoughts; 'tis likeliest

They had engag'd their wandering steps too far;
And envious darkness, ere they could return,
Had stole them from me: else, O thievish Night,
Why should'st thou, but for some felonious end,
In thy dark lantern thus close up the stars,
That Nature hung in Heaven, and fill'd their lamps
With everlasting oil, to give due light
To the misled and lonely traveller?
This is the place, as well as I may guess,
Whence even now the tumult of loud mirth
Was rife, and perfect in my listening ear;
Yet nought but single darkness do I find.
What might this be? A thousand fantasies
Begin to throng into my memory,
Of calling shapes, and beckoning shadows dire,
And aery tongues, that syllable mens names
On sands, and shores, and desart wildernesses.
These thoughts may startle well, but not astound,
The virtuous mind, that ever walks attended
By a strong siding champion, Conscience.—
O welcome pure-ey'd Faith, white-handed Hope,
Thou hovering Angel, girt with golden wings,
And thou, unblemish'd form of Chastity!
I see ye visibly, and now believe
That He, the Supreme Good, to whom all things ill
Are but as slavish officers of vengeance,
Would send a glistering guardian, if need were,

To keep my life and honour unassail'd.
Was I deceiv'd, or did a sable cloud
Turn forth her silver lining on the night?
I did not err, there does a sable cloud
Turn forth her silver lining on the night,
And casts a gleam over this tufted grove:
I cannot halloo to my Brothers, but
Such noise as I can make to be heard farthest
I'll venture; for my new-enliven'd spirits
Prompt me; and they perhaps are not far off.

SONG.

Sweet Echo, sweetest Nymph, that liv'st unseen
Within thy aery shell,
By slow Meander's margent green,
And in the violet-embroider'd vale,
Where the love-lorn nightingale
Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well;
Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair
That likest thy Narcissus are?
O, if thou have
Hid them in some flowery cave,
Tell me but where,
Sweet queen of parly, daughter of the sphere
So may'st thou be translated to the skies,
And give resounding grace to all Heaven's harmonies.

Enter COMUS.

Comus. Can any mortal mixture of earth's mould
Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment?
Sure something holy lodges in that breast,
And with these raptures moves the vocal air
To testify his hidden residence.
How sweetly did they float upon the wings
Of silence, through the empty-vaulted night,
At every fall smoothing the raven-down
Of darkness, till it smil'd! I have oft heard
My mother Circe with the Syrens three,
Amidst the flowery-kirtled Naiades,
Culling their potent herbs and baleful drugs;
Who, as they sung, would take the prison'd soul,
And lap it in Elysium: Scylla wept,
And chid her barking waves into attention,
And fell Charybdis murmur'd soft applause:
Yet they in pleasing slumber lull'd the sense,
And in sweet madness robb'd it of itself;
But such a sacred and home-felt delight,
Such sober certainty of waking bliss,
I never heard till now. I'll speak to her,
And she shall be my queen. Hail, foreign wonder!
Whom certain these rough shades did never breed,
Unless the Goddess that in rural shrine
Dwell'st here with Pan, or Sylvan; by blest song

Forbidding every bleak unkindly fog
To touch the prosperous growth of this tall wood.

Lady. Nay, gentle shepherd, ill is lost that praise,
That is address'd to unattending ears:
Not any boast of skill, but extreme shift
How to regain my sever'd company,
Compell'd me to awake the courteous Echo
To give me answer from her mossy couch.

Comus. What chance, good Lady, hath bereft you thus?

Lady. Dim darkness, and his leafy labyrinth.

Comus. Could that divide you from near ushering guides?

Lady. They left me weary on a grassy turf.

Comus. By falshood, or discourtesy, or why?

Lady. To seek i' the valley some cool friendly spring.

Comus. And left your fair side all unguarded, Lady?

Lady. They were but twain, and purpos'd quick return.

Comus. Perhaps forestalling night prevented them.

Lady. How easy my misfortune is to hit!

Comus. Imports their loss, beside the present need?

Lady. No less than if I should my Brothers lose.
Comus. Were they of manly prime, or youthful bloom?
Lady. As smooth as Hebe's their unrazor'd lips.
Comus. Two such I saw, what time the labour'd ox
In his loose traces from the furrow came,
And the swink'd dedger at his supper sat;
I saw them under a green mantling vine,
That crawls along the side of yon small hill,
Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots;
Their port was more than human, as they stood:
I took it for a faery vision
Of some gay creatures of the element,
That in the colours of the rainbow live,
And play i' the plighted clouds. I was aw-struck,
And, as I past, I worshipt; if those you seek,
It were a journey like the path of Heaven,
To help you find them.
Lady. Gentle Villager,
What readiest way would bring me to the place?
Comus. Due west it rises from this shrubby point.
Lady. To find out that, good Shepherd, I suppose
In such a scant allowance of star-light,
Would overtask the best land pilot's art,
Without the sure guess of well-practis'd feet.
Comus. I know each lane, and every alley green,
Dingle, or bushy dell of this wild wood,

And every bosky bourn from side to side,
My daily walks and ancient neighbourhood;
And if your stray attendance be yet lodg'd,
Or shroud within this limits, I shall know
Ere morrow wake, or the low-roosted lark
From her thatch'd pallet rouse; if otherwise,
I can conduct you, Lady, to a low
But loyal cottage, where you may be safe
Till further quest.

Lady. Shepherd, I take thy word
And trust thy honest offer'd courtesy,
Which oft is sooner found in lowly sheds
With smoaky rafters, than in tap'stry halls
In courts of princes, where it first was nam'd,
And yet is most pretended; In a place
Less warranted than this, or less secure,
I cannot be, that I should fear to change it.—
Eye me, blest Providence, and square my trial
To my proportion'd strength! Shepherd, lead on.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter the two BROTHERS.

Elder Brother. Unmuffle, ye faint stars; and thou, fair moon,
That wont'st to love the traveller's benison,
Stoop thy pale visage through an amber cloud,
And disinherit Chaos, that reigns here
In double night of darkness and of shades;

Or, if your influence be quite damm'd up
With black usurping mists, some gentle taper,
Though a rush-candle from the wicker hole
Of some clay habitation, visit us
With thy long-levell'd rule of streaming light;
And thou shalt be our star of Arcady,
Or Tyrian Cynosure.

Second Brother. Or, if our eyes
Be barr'd that happiness, might we but hear
The folded flocks penn'd in their wattled cotes,
Or sound of pastoral reed with oaten stops,
Or whistle from the lodge, or village cock
Count the night watches to his feathery dames,
'Twould be some solace yet, some little cheering,
In this close dungeon of innumerable boughs.
But, O that hapless virgin, our lost Sister!
Where may she wander now, whither betake her
From the chill dew, among rude burs and thistles?
Perhaps some cold bank is her bolster now,
Or 'gainst the rugged bark of some broad elm
Leans her unpillow'd head, fraught with sad fears.
What, if in wild amazement and affright?
Or, while we speak, within the direful grasp
Of savage hunger, or of savage heat?

Elder Brother. Peace, Brother; be not over-exquisite
To cast the fashion of uncertain evils:
For grant they be so, while they rest unknown,

What need a man forestall his date of grief,
And run to meet what he would most avoid?
Or if they be but false alarms of fear,
How bitter is such self-delusion!
I do not think my Sister so to seek,
Or so unprincipled in Virtue's book,
And the sweet peace that goodness bosoms ever,
As that the single want of light and noise
(Not being in danger, as I trust she is not,)
Could stir the constant mood of her calm thoughts,
And put them into misbecoming plight.
Virtue could see to do what Virtue would
By her own radiant light, though sun and moon
Were in the flat sea sunk. And wisdom's self
Oft seeks to sweet retired solitude;
Where, with her best nurse, Contemplation,
She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings,
That in the various bustle of resort
Were all-to ruffled, and sometimes impair'd.
He, that has light within his own clear breast
May sit i' the center, and enjoy bright day:
But he, that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts,
Benighted walks under the mid-day sun;
Himself is his own dungeon.

Second Brother. 'Tis most true,
That musing Meditation most affects
The pensive secrecy of desart cell,
Far from the cheerful haunt of men and herds,

And sits as safe as in a senate-house;
For who would rob a hermit of his weeds,
His few books, or his beads, or maple dish,
Or do his gray hairs any violence?
But Beauty, like the fair Hesperian tree,
Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard
Of dragon-watch with unenchanted eye,
To save her blossoms, and defend her fruit,
From the rash hand of bold Incontinence.
You may as well spread out the unsunn'd heaps
Of miser's treasure by an outlaw's den,
And tell me it is safe, as bid me hope
Danger will wink on Opportunity,
And let a single helpless maiden pass
Uninjur'd in this wild surrounding waste.
Of night, or loneliness, it recks me not;
I fear the dread events that dog them both,
Lest some ill-greeting touch attempt the person
Of our unowned Sister.

Elder Brother. I do not, Brother,
Infer, as if I thought my Sister's state
Secure, without all doubt or controversy,
Yet, where an equal poise of hope and fear
Does arbitrate the event, my nature is
That I incline to hope, rather than fear,
And gladly banish squint suspicion.
My Sister is not so defenceless left
As you imagine; she has a hidden strength,

Which you remember not.

Second Brother. What hidden strength,
Unless the strength of Heaven, if you mean that?

Elder Brother. I mean that too, but yet a hidden strength,
Which, if Heaven gave it, may be term'd her own
'Tis Chastity, my Brother, Chastity:
She, that has that, is clad in complete steel;
And, like a quiver'd Nymph with arrows keen,
May trace huge forests, and unharbour'd heaths,
Infamous hills, and sandy perilous wilds;
Where, through the sacred rays of Chastity,
No savage fierce, bandite, or mountaineer,
Will dare to spoil her virgin purity:
Yea there, where very Desolation dwells,
By grots and caverns shagg'd with horrid shades,
She may pass on with unblench'd majesty,
Be it not done in pride, or in presumption.
Some say, no evil thing that walks by night
In fog or fire, by lake or moorish fen,
Blue meager hag, or stubborn unlaid ghost
That breaks his magick chains at Curfeu time,
No goblin, or swart faery of the mine,
Hath hurtful power o'er true Virginity.
Do ye believe me yet, or shall I call
Antiquity from the old schools of Greece
To testify the arms of Chastity?
Hence had the huntress Dian her dread brow,

Fair silver-shafted queen, for ever chaste,
Wherewith she tam'd the brinded lioness
And spotted mountain-pard, but set at nought
The frivolous bolt of Cupid; gods and men
Fear'd her stern frown, and she was queen o' the woods.
What was the snaky-headed Gorgon shield,
That wise Minerva wore, unconquer'd virgin,
Wherewith she freez'd her foes to congeal'd stone,
But rigid looks of chaste austerity,
And noble grace, that dash'd brute violence
With sudden adoration and blank awe?
So dear to Heaven is saintly Chastity,
That when a soul is found sincerely so,
A thousand liveried Angels lackey her,
Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt;
And, in clear dream and solemn vision,
Tell her of things that no gross ear can hear;
Till oft converse with heavenly habitant
Begin to cast a beam on the outward shape,
The unpolluted temple of the mind,
And turns it by degrees to the soul's essence,
Till all be made immortal: But when Lust,
By unchaste looks, loose gestures, and foul talk,
But most by lewd and lavish act of sin,
Lets in defilement to the inward parts,
The soul grows clotted by contagion,
Imbodies, and imbrutes, till she quite lose

The divine property of her first being.
Such are those thick and gloomy shadows damp,
Oft seen in charnel vaults and sepulchres
Lingering, and sitting by a new made grave,
As loth to leave the body that it lov'd,
And link'd itself by carnal sensuality
To a degenerate and degraded state.
Second Brother. How charming is divine Philosophy!
Not harsh, and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,
But musical as is Apollo's lute,
And a perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets,
Where no crude surfeit reigns.
Elder Brother. List, list; I hear
Some far off holloo break the silent air.
Second Brother. Methought so too; what should it be?
Elder Brother. For certain
Either some one like us night-founder'd here,
Or else some neighbour woodman, or, at worst,
Some roving robber calling to his fellows.
Second Brother. Heaven keep my Sister. Again, and near!
Best draw, and stand upon our guard.
Elder Brother. I'll halloo:
If he be friendly, he comes well; if not,
Defence is a good cause, and Heaven be for us.

[*Enter the* ATTENDANT SPIRIT, *habited like a Shepherd.*]

That halloo I should know; what are you? speak;
Come not too near, you fall on iron stakes else.

Spirit. What voice is that? my young Lord? speak again.

Second Brother. O Brother, 'tis my father's shepherd, sure,

Elder Brother. Thyrsis? Whose artful strains have oft delay'd
The huddling brook to hear his madrigal,
And sweeten'd every muskrose of the dale?
How cam'st thou here, good swain? hath any ram
Slipt from the fold, or young kid lost his dam,
Or straggling wether the pent flock forsook?
How could'st thou find this dark sequester'd nook?

Spirit. O my lov'd master's heir, and his next joy,
I came not here on such a trivial toy
As a stray'd ewe, or to pursue the stealth
Of pilfering wolf; not all the fleecy wealth,
That doth enrich these downs, is worth a thought
To this my errand, and the care it brought.
But, O my virgin Lady, where is she?
How chance she is not in your company?

Elder Brother. To tell thee sadly, Shepherd, without blame,
Or our neglect, we lost her as we came.

Spirit Ay me unhappy! then my fears are true.

Elder Brother. What fears, good Thyrsis? Pr'y-
thee briefly shew.

Spirit. I'll tell ye; 'tis not vain or fabulous
(Though so esteem'd by shallow ignorance,)
What the sage poets, taught by the heavenly Muse,
Storied of old in high immortal verse,
Of dire chimeras, and enchanted isles,
And rifted rocks whose entrance leads to Hell;
For such there be, but unbelief is blind.
Within the navel of this hideous wood,
Immur'd in cypress shades a sorcerer dwells,
Of Bacchus and of Circe born, great Comus,
Deep skill'd in all his mother's witcheries;
And here to every thirsty wanderer
By sly enticement gives his baneful cup,
With many murmurs mix'd, whose pleasing poison
The visage quite transforms of him that drinks,
And the inglorious likeness of a beast
Fixes instead, unmoulding reason's mintage
Character'd in the face: This have I learnt
Tending my flocks hard by i' the hilly crofts,
That brow this bottom-glade; whence night by
night
He and his monstrous rout are heard to howl,
Like stabled wolves, or tigers at their prey,
Doing abhorred rites to Hecate
In their obscured haunts of inmost bowers.
Yet have they many baits, and guileful spells,

To inveigle and invite the unwary sense
Of them that pass unweeting by the way.
This evening late, by then the chewing flocks
Had tak'n their supper on the savoury herb
Of knot-grass dew-besprent, and were in fold,
I sat me down to watch upon a bank
With ivy canopied, and interwove
With flaunting honey-suckle, and began,
Wrapt in a pleasing fit of melancholy,
To meditate my rural minstrelsy,
Till Fancy had her fill; but, ere a close,
The wonted roar was up amidst the woods,
And fill'd the air with barbarous dissonance;
At which I ceas'd, and listen'd them a while,
Till an unusual stop of sudden silence
Gave respite to the drowsy frighted steeds,
That draw the litter of close-curtain'd Sleep;
At last a soft and solemn-breathing sound
Rose like a steam of rich distill'd perfumes,
And stole upon the air, that even Silence
Was took ere she was ware, and wish'd she might
Deny her nature, and be never more,
Still, to be so displac'd. I was all ear,
And took in strains that might create a soul
Under the ribs of Death: but O! ere long,
Too well I did perceive it was the voice
Of my most honour'd Lady, your dear Sister.
Amaz'd I stood, harrow'd with grief and fear,

And, O poor hapless nightingale, thought I,
How sweet thou sing'st, how near the deadly snare!
Then down the lawns I ran with headlong haste,
Through paths and turnings often trod by day,
Till, guided by mine ear, I found the place,
Where that damn'd wisard, hid in sly disguise,
(For so by certain signs I knew,) had met
Already, ere my best speed could prevent,
The aidless innocent Lady, his wish'd prey;
Who gently ask'd if he had seen such two,
Supposing him some neighbour villager.
Longer I durst not stay, but soon I guess'd
Ye where the two she meant; with that I sprang
Into swift flight, till I had found you here;
But further know I not.

Second Brother. O night, and shades!
How are ye join'd with Hell in triple knot
Against the unarmed weakness of one virgin,
Alone, and helpless! Is this the confidence
You gave me, Brother?

Elder Brother. Yes, and keep it still;
Lean on it safely; not a period
Shall be unsaid for me: Against the threats
Of malice, or for sorcery, or that power
Which erring Men call Chance, this I hold firm;—
Virtue may be assail'd, but never hurt,
Surpriz'd by unjust force, but not enthrall'd;
Yea, even that, which mischief meant most harm,

Shall in the happy trial prove most glory;
But evil on itself shall back recoil,
And mix no more with goodness; when at last
Gather'd like scum, and settled to itself,
It shall be in eternal restless change
Self-fed, and self-consum'd; If this fail,
The pillar'd firmament is rottenness,
And earth's base built on stubble. But come, let's on,
Against the opposing will and arm of Heaven
May never this just sword be lifted up!
But for that damn'd magician, let him be girt
With all the legions that troop
Under the sooty flag of Acheron,
Harpies and Hydras, or all the monstrous forms
'Twixt Africa and Ind, I'll find him out,
And force him to return his purchase back,
Or drag him by the curls to a foul death,
Curs'd as his life.

Spirit. Alas! good venturous Youth,
I love thy courage yet, and bold emprise;
But here thy sword can do thee little stead;
Far other arms and other weapons must
Be those, that quell the might of hellish charms:
He with his bare wand can unthread thy joints,
And crumble all thy sinews.

Elder Brother. Why pr'ythee, Shepherd,
How durst thou then thyself approach so near,

As to make this relation?

Spirit. Care, and utmost shifts,
How to secure the lady from surprisal,
Brought to my mind a certain shepherd lad,
Of small regard to see to, yet well skill'd
In every virtuous, and healing herb,
That spreads her verdant leaf to the morning ray:
He lov'd me well, and oft would beg me sing;
Which when I did, he on the tender grass
Would sit, and hearken even to ecstasy,
And in requital ope his leathern scrip,
And show me simples of a thousand names,
Telling their strange and vigorous faculties:
Amongst the rest a small unsightly root,
But of divine effect, he cull'd me out;
The leaf was darkish, and had prickles on it,
But in another country, as he said,
Bore a bright golden flower, but not in this soil:
Unknown, and like esteem'd, and the dull swain
Treads on it daily with his clouted shoon:
And yet more med'cinal is it than that Moly,
That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave;
He call'd it Hæmony, and gave it me,
And bade me keep it as of sovran use
'Gainst all enchantments, mildew blast, or damp,
Or ghastly furies' apparition.
I purs'd it up, but little reckoning made,
Till now that this extremity compell'd:

But now I find it true; for by this means
I knew the foul enchanter though disguis'd,
Entered the very lime-twigs of his spells,
And yet came off: If you have this about you,
(As I will give you when we go) you may
Boldly assault the necromancer's hall;
Where if he be, with dauntless hardihood,
And brandish'd blade, rush on him; break his glass
And shed the luscious liquour on the ground,
But seise his wand; though he and his curs'd crew
Fierce sign of battle make, and menace high,
Or like the sons of Vulcan vomit smoke,
Yet will they soon retire, if he but shrink.

Elder Brother. Thyrsis, lead on apace, I'll follow thee:
And some good Angel bear a shield before us.

The Scene changes to a stately palace, set out with all manner of deliciousness: soft musick, tables spread with all dainties. Comus *appears with his rabble, and the* Lady *set in an enchanted chair, to whom he offers his glass, which she puts by, and goes about to rise.*

Comus.

Nay, Lady, sit; if I but wave this wand,
Your nerves are all chain'd up in alabaster,
And you a statue, or, as Daphne was,
Root-bound that fled Apollo.

Lady. Fool, do not boast;
Thou canst not touch the freedom of my mind
With all thy charms, although this corporal rind
Thou hast immanacled, while Heaven sees good.

Comus. Why are you vex'd, Lady? Why do you frown?
Here dwell no frowns, nor anger; from these gates
Sorrow flies far: See, here be all the pleasures,
That fancy can beget on youthful thoughts,
When the fresh blood grows lively, and returns
Brisk as the April buds in primrose-season.
And first, behold this cordial julep here,
That flames and dances in his crystal bounds
With spirits of balm and fragrant syrops mix'd:
Not that Nepenthes, which the wife of Thone
In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena,
Is of such power to stir up joy as this,
To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst.
Why should you be so cruel to yourself,
And to those dainty limbs, which Nature lent
For gentle usage and soft delicacy?
But you invert the covenants of her trust,
And harshly deal, like an ill borrower,
With that which you receiv'd on other terms;
Scorning the unexempt condition,
By which all mortal frailty must subsist,
Refreshment after toil, ease after pain,
That have been tir'd all day without repast,

And timely rest have wanted; but, fair Virgin,
This will restore all soon.

Lady. 'Twill not, false traitor!
'Twill not restore the truth and honesty,
That thou hast banish'd from thy tongue with lies.
Was this the cottage, and the safe abode,
Thou told'st me of? What grim aspects are these,
These ugly-headed monster's? Mercy guard me!
Hence with thy brew'd enchantments, foul deceiver!
Hast thou betray'd my credulous innocence
With visor'd falshood and base forgery?
And would'st thou seek again to trap me here
With liquorish baits, fit to ensnare a brute?
Were it a draught for Juno when she banquets,
I would not taste thy treasonous offer; none,
But such as are good men, can give good things;
And that, which is not good, is not delicious
To a well-govern'd and wise appetite.

Comus. O foolishness of men! that lend their ears
To those budge doctors of the Stoick fur,
And fetch their precepts from the Cynick tub,
Praising the lean and sallow Abstinence.
Wherefore did Nature pour her bounties forth
With such a full and unwithdrawing hand,
Covering the earth with odours, fruits, and flocks,
Thronging the seas with spawn innumerable,

But all to please and sate the curious taste?
And set to work millions of spinning worms,
That in their green shops weave the smooth-hair'd silk,
To deck her sons; and, that no corner might
Be vacant of her plenty, in her own loins
She hutch'd the all-worshipt ore, and precious gems
To store her children with: If all the world
Should in a pet of temperance feed on pulse,
Drink the clear stream, and nothing wear but frieze,
The All-giver would be unthank'd, would be unprais'd,
Not half his riches known, and yet despis'd;
And we should serve him as a grudging master,
As a penurious niggard of his wealth;
And live like Nature's bastards, not her sons,
Who would be quite surcharg'd with her own weight
And strangled with her waste fertility;
The earth cumber'd, and the wing'd air dark'd with plumes,
The herds would over-multitude their lords,
The sea o'er fraught would swell, and the unsought diamonds
Would so imblaze the forehead of the deep,
And so bestud with stars, that they below
Would grow inur'd to light, and come at last
To gaze upon the sun with shameless brows.
List, Lady; be not coy, and be not cosen'd

With that same vaunted name, Virginity.
Beauty is Nature's coin, must not be hoarded,
But must be current; and the good thereof
Consists in mutual and partaken bliss,
Unsavoury in the enjoyment of itself;
If you let slip time, like a neglected rose
It withers on the stalk with languish'd head.
Beauty is Nature's brag, and must be shown
In courts, at feasts, and high solemnities,
Where most may wonder at the workmanship;
It is for homely features to keep home,
They had their name thence; coarse complexions,
And cheeks of sorry grain, will serve to ply
The sampler, and to tease the huswife's wool.
What need a vermeil-tinctur'd lip for that,
Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the Morn?
There was another meaning in these gifts;
Think what, and be advis'd; you are but young yet.

Lady. I had not thought to have unlock'd my lips
In this unhallow'd air, but that this juggler
Would think to charm my judgement, as mine eyes,
Obtruding false rules prank'd in reason's garb.
I hate when Vice can bolt her arguments,
And Virtue has no tongue to check her pride.—
Impostor! do not charge most innocent Nature,
As if she would her children should be riotous
With her abundance; she, good cateress,
Means her provision only to the good,

That live according to her sober laws,
And holy dictate of spare Temperance:
If every just man, that now pines with want,
Had but a moderate and beseeming share
Of that which lewdly-pamper'd Luxury
Now heaps upon some few, with vast excess,
Nature's full blessings would be well dispens'd
In unsuperfluous even proportion,
And she no whit incumber'd with her store;
And then the Giver would be better thank'd,
His praise due paid: For swinish Gluttony
Ne'er looks to Heaven amidst his gorgeous feast,
But with besotted base ingratitude
Crams, and blasphemes his Feeder. Shall I go on?
Or have I said enough? To him that dares
Arm his profane tongue with contemptuous words
Against the sun-clad Power of Chastity,
Fain would I something say, yet to what end?
Thou hast nor ear, nor soul, to apprehend
The sublime notion, and high mystery,
That must be utter'd to unfold the sage
And serious doctrine of Virginity;
And thou art worthy that thou should'st not know
More happiness than this thy present lot.
Enjoy your dear wit, and gay rhetorick,
That hath so well been taught her dazzling fenee;
Thou art not fit to hear thyself convinc'd:
Yet, should I try, the uncontrolled worth

Of this pure cause would kindle my rapt spirits
To such a flame of sacred vehemence,
That dumb things would be mov'd to sympathize,
And the brute Earth would lend her nerves, and shake,
Till all thy magick structures, rear'd so high,
Were shatter'd into heaps o'er thy false head.

Comus. She fables not; I feel that I do fear
Her words set off by some superiour power;
And though not mortal, yet a cold shuddering dew
Dips me all o'er, as when the wrath of Jove
Speaks thunder, and the chains of Erebus,
To some of Saturn's crew. I must dissemble,
And try her yet more strongly.—Come, no more;
This is mere moral babble, and direct
Against the canon-laws of our foundation;
I must not suffer this; yet 'tis but the lees
And settlings of a melancholy blood:
But this will cure all straight: one sip of this
Will bathe the drooping spirits in delight,
Beyond the bliss of dreams. Be wise, and taste.—

The BROTHERS *rush in with swords drawn, wrest his glass out of his hand, and break it against the ground; his rout make sign of resistance, but are all driven in. The* ATTENDANT SPIRIT *comes in.*

Spirit.

What, have you let the false enchanter 'scape?
O ye mistook, ye should have snatch'd his wand,
And bound him fast; without his rod revers'd,
And backward mutters of dissevering power,
We cannot free the Lady that sits here
In stony fetters fix'd, and motionless:
Yet stay, be not disturb'd; now I bethink me,
Some other means I have which may be us'd,
Which once of Melibœus old I learnt,
The soothest shepherd that e'er pip'd on plains.
There is a gentle Nymph not far from hence,
That with moist curb sways the smooth Severn stream,
Sabrina is her name, a virgin pure;
Whilom she was the daughter of Locrine,
That had the scepter from his father Brute.
She, guiltless damsel, flying the mad pursuit
Of her enraged stepdame Guendolen,
Commended her fair innocence to the flood,
That staid her flight with his cross-flowing course.
The Water-Nymphs, that in the bottom play'd,
Held up their pearled wrists, and took her in,
Bearing her straight to aged Nereus' hall;
Who, piteous of her woes, rear'd her lank head,
And gave her to his daughters to imbathe
In nectar'd lavers, strew'd with asphodel;
And through the porch and inlet of each sense

Dropt in ambrosial oils, till she reviv'd,
And underwent a quick immortal change,
Made Goddess of the river: still she retains
Her maiden gentleness, and oft at eve
Visits the herbs along the twilight meadows,
Helping all urchin blasts, and ill-luck signs
That the shrewd meddling elfe delights to make,
Which she with precious vial'd liquours heals;
For which the shepherds at their festivals
Carol her goodness loud in rustick lays,
And throw sweet garland wreaths into her stream
Of pansies, pinks, and gaudy daffodils.
And, as the old swain said, she can unlock
The clasping charm, and thaw the numming spell,
If she be right invok'd in warbled song;
For maidenhood she loves, and will be swift
To aid a virgin, such as was herself,
In hard-besetting need: this will I try,
And add the power of some adjuring verse.

SONG.

Sabrina fair,
  Listen where thou art sitting
Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,
  In twisted braids of lillies knitting
The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair;
  Listen for dear honour's sake,
  Goddess of the silver lake,
    Listen, and save.

Listen, and appear to us,
In name of great Oceanus;
By the earth-shaking Neptune's mace,
And Tethys' grave majestick pace,
By hoary Nereus' wrinkled look,
And the Carpathian wizard's hook,
By scaly Triton's winding shell,
And old sooth-saying Glaucus' spell,
By Leucothea's lovely hands,
And her Son that rules the strands,
By Thetis' tinsel-slipper'd feet,
And the songs of Syrens sweet,
By dead Parthenope's dear tomb,
And fair Ligea's golden comb,
Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks,
Sleeking her soft alluring locks;
By all the Nymphs that nightly dance
Upon thy streams with wily glance,
Rise, rise, and heave thy rosy head,
From the coral-paven bed,
And bridle in thy headlong wave,
Till thou our summons answer'd have.
Listen, and save!

SABRINA *rises, attended by Water-Nymphs, and sings.*

By the rushy-fringed bank,
Where grows the willow, and the osier dank,

My sliding chariot stays,
Thick set with agate, and the azurn sheen
Of turkis blue, and emerald green,
That in the channel strays;
Whilst from off the waters fleet
Thus I set my printless feet
O'er the cowslip's velvet head,
That bends not as I tread;
Gentle Swain, at thy request,
I am here.

Spirit. Goddess dear,
We implore thy powerful hand
To undo the charmed band
Of true virgin here distrest,
Through the force, and through the wile,
Of unblest enchanter vile.

Sabrina. Shepherd, 'tis my office best
To help ensnared chastity:
Brightest Lady, look on me;
Thus I sprinkle on thy breast
Drops, that from my fountain pure
I have kept, of precious cure;
Thrice upon thy finger's tip,
Thrice upon thy rubied lip:
Next this marble venom'd seat,
Smear'd with gums of glutinous heat,
I touch with chaste palms moist and cold:——
Now the spell has lost his hold;

And I must haste, ere morning hour,
To wait in Amphitrite's bower.

SABRINA *descends, and the* LADY *rises out of her seat.*

Spirit. Virgin, daughter of Locrine
Sprung of old Anchises' line,
May thy brimmed waves for this
Their full tribute never miss
From a thousand pretty rills,
That tumble down the snowy hills:
Summer drouth, or singed air,
Never scorch thy tresses fair,
Nor wet October's torrent flood
Thy molten crystal fill with mud;
May thy billows roll ashore
The beryl and the golden ore;
May thy lofty head be crown'd
With many a tower and terrace round,
And here and there thy banks upon
With groves and myrrh and cinnamon!
Come, Lady, while Heaven lends us grace,
Let us fly this cursed place,
Lest the sorcerer us entice
With some other new device.
Not a waste or needless sound,
Till we come on holier ground,
I shall be your faithful guide

Through this gloomy covert wide,
And not many furlongs thence
Is your Father's residence,
Where this night are met in state
Many a friend to gratulate
His wish'd presence; and beside
All the swains, that there abide,
With jigs and rural dance resort;
We shall catch them at their sport,
And our sudden coming there
Will double all their mirth and chere;
Come, let us haste, the stars grow high,
But night sits monarch yet in the mid sky.

The Scene changes, presenting Ludlow town and the President's Castle; then come in Country Dancers, after them the ATTENDANT SPIRIT, *with the Two* BROTHERS, *and the* LADY.

SONG.

Spirit. Back, Shepherds, back; enough your play,
Till next sun-shine holiday:
Here be, without duck or nod,
Other trippings to be trod
Of lighter toes, and such court guise
As Mercury did first devise,

With the mincing Dryades,
On the lawns, and on the leas.

This second Song presents them to their Father and Mother.

Noble Lord, and Lady bright,
I have brought ye new delight;
Here behold so goodly grown
Three fair branches of your own;
Heaven hath timely tried their youth,
Their faith, their patience, and their truth,
And sent them here through hard assays
With a crown of deathless praise,
To triumph in victorious dance
O'er sensual Folly and Intemperance.

The dances [being] ended, the SPIRIT *epilogizes.*

Spirit. To the ocean now I fly,
And those happy climes that lie
Where day never shuts his eye,
Up in the broad fields of the sky:
There I suck the liquid air
All amidst the gardens fair
Of Hesperus, and his daughters three
That sing about the golden tree:
Along the crisped shades and bowers
Revels the spruce and jocund Spring;

The Graces, and the rosy-bosom'd Hours,
Thither all their bounties bring;
There eternal Summer dwells,
And West-Winds, with musky wing,
About the cedar'n alleys fling
Nard and Cassia's balmy smells.
Iris there with humid bow
Waters the odorous banks, that blow
Flowers of more mingled hew
Than her purfled scarf can shew;
And drenches with Elysian dew
(List, mortals, if your ears be true,)
Beds of hyacinth and roses,
Where young Adonis oft reposes,
Waxing well of his deep wound
In slumber soft, and on the ground
Sadly sits the Assyrian queen:
But far above in spangled sheen
Celestial Cupid, her fam'd son, advanc'd,
Holds his dear Psyche sweet entranc'd,
After her wandering labours long,
Till free consent the Gods among
Make her his eternal bride,
And from her fair unspotted side
Two blissful twins are to be born,
Youth and Joy; so Jove hath sworn.
But now my task is smoothly done,

I can fly, or I can run,
Quickly to the green earth's end,
Where the bow'd welkin slow doth bend;
And from thence can soar as soon
To the corners of the moon.
Mortals, that would follow me.
Love Virtue; she alone is free:
She can teach ye how to clime
Higher than the sphery chime;
Or if Virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her.

SONNETS

SONNETS.

I.

TO THE

NIGHTINGALE.

O NIGHTINGALE, that on yon bloomy spray
Warblest at eve, when all the woods are still;
Thou with fresh hope the lover's heart dost fill,
While the jolly Hours lead on propitious May.
Thy liquid notes that close the eye of day,
First heard before the shallow cuckoo's bill,
Portend success in love; O, if Jove's will
Have link'd that amorous power to thy soft lay,
Now timely sing, ere the rude bird of hate
Foretel my hopeless doom in some grove nigh;
As thou from year to year hast sung too late
For my relief, yet hadst no reason why:
Whether the Muse, or Love, call thee his mate,
Both them I serve, and of their train am I.

II.

On his being arrived at the age of 23.

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,
Stoln on his wing my three and twentieth year!
My hasting days fly on with full career,
But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th.
Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth,
That I to manhood am arriv'd so near;
And inward ripeness doth much less appear,
That some more timely-happy spirits endu'th.
Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow,
It shall be still in strictest measure even
To that same lot, however mean or high,
Toward which Time leads me, and the Will of Heaven;
All is, if I have grace to use it so,
As ever in my great Task-Master's eye.

III.

When the assault was intended to the CITY.

CAPTAIN, or Colonel, or Knight in arms,
Whose chance on these defenceless doors may seise,
If deed of honour did thee ever please,
Guard them, and him within protect from harms!
He can requite thee; for he knows the charms
That call fame on such gentle acts as these,
And he can spread thy name o'er lands and seas,
Whatever clime the sun's bright circle warms.
Lift not thy spear against the Muse's bower:
The great Emathian conquerour bid spare
The house of Pindarus, when temple and tower
Went to the ground: And the repeated air
Of sad Electra's poet had the power
To save the Athenian walls from ruin bare.

IV.

TO A

VIRTUOUS YOUNG LADY.

LADY, that in the prime of earliest youth
Wisely hast shunn'd the broad way and the green,
And with those few art eminently seen,
That labour up the hill of heavenly truth:
The better part with Mary and with Ruth
Chosen thou hast; and they that overween,
And at thy growing virtues fret their spleen,
No anger find in thee, but pity and ruth.
Thy care is fix'd, and zealously attends
To fill thy odorous lamp with deeds of light,
And hope that reaps not shame. Therefore be sure
Thou, when the bridegroom with his feastful friend
Passes to bliss at the mid hour of night,
Hast gain'd thy entrance, Virgin wise and pure.

V.

TO THE

LADY MARGARET LEY.

DAUGHTER to that good Earl, once President
Of England's Council and her Treasury,
Who liv'd in both, unstain'd with gold or fee,
And left them both, more in himself content,
Till sad the breaking of that Parliament
Broke him, as that dishonest victory
At Chæronea, fatal to liberty,
Kill'd with report that old man eloquent.
Though later born than to have known the days
Wherein your father flourish'd, yet by you,
Madam, methinks I see him living yet;
So well your words his noble virtues praise,
That all both judge you to relate them true,
And to possess them, honour'd Margaret.

VI.

On the detraction which followed upon my writing certain treatises.

A BOOK was writ of late call'd *Tetrachordon*,
And woven close, both matter, form, and stile;
The subject new: it walk'd the Town awhile,
Numbering good intellects; now seldom por'd on.
Cries the stall-reader, Bless us! what a word on
A title page is this! and some in file
Stand spelling false, while one might walk to Mile-
End Green. Why is it harder, Sirs, than Gordon
Colkitto, or Macdonnel, or Galasp?
Those rugged names to our like mouths grow sleek,
That would have made Quintilian stare and gasp.
Thy age, like ours, O Soul of Sir John Cheek,
Hated not learning worse than toad or asp,
When thou taught'st Cambridge, and king Edward, Greek.

VII.

ON THE SAME.

I DID but prompt the age to quit their clogs
By the known rules of ancient liberty,
When straight a barbarous noise environs me
Of owls and cuckoos, asses, apes and dogs:
As when those hinds that were transform'd to frogs
Rail'd at Latona's twin-born progeny,
Which after held the sun and moon in fee.
But this is got by casting pearl to hogs;
That bawl for freedom in their senseless mood,
And still revolt, when truth would set them free.
Licence they mean when they cry Liberty;
For who loves that, must first be wise and good;
But from that mark how far they rove we see,
For all this waste of wealth, and loss of blood.

VIII.

TO

MR. H. LAWES,

ON THE

Publishing his Airs.

HARRY, whose tuneful and well measur'd song
First taught our English musick how to span
Words with just note and accent, not to scan
With Midas ears, committing short and long;
Thy worth and skill exempts thee from the throng,
With praise enough for envy to look wan;
To after age thou shalt be writ the man,
That with smooth air could'st humour best our tongue.
Thou honour'st verse, and verse must lend her wing
To honour thee, the priest of Phœbus' quire,
That tun'st their happiest lines in hymn, or story.
Dante shall give Fame leave to set thee higher
Than his Casella, whom he woo'd to sing
Met in the milder shades of Purgatory.

IX.

On the religious memory of Mrs. CATHERINE THOMSON, my christian friend, deceased 16 Decemb. 1646.

When Faith and Love, which parted from thee never,
Had ripen'd thy just soul to dwell with God,
Meekly thou didst resign this earthly load
Of death call'd life; which us from life doth sever.
Thy works, and alms, and all thy good endeavour,
Staid not behind, nor in the grave were trod;
But, as Faith pointed with her golden rod,
Follow'd thee up to joy and bliss for ever.
Love led them on, and Faith who knew them best
Thy hand-maids, clad them o'er with purple beams
And azure wings, that up they flew so drest,
And spake the truth of thee on glorious themes
Before the Judge; who thenceforth bid thee rest,
And drink thy fill of pure immortal streams.

X.

TO THE

LORD GENERAL FAIRFAX.

FAIRFAX, whose name in arms through Europe rings,
Filling each mouth with envy or with praise,
And all her jealous monarchs with amaze
And rumours loud, that daunt remotest kings;
Thy firm unshaken virtue ever brings
Victory home, though new rebellions raise
Their Hydra heads, and the false North displays
Her broken league to imp their serpent-wings.
O yet a nobler task awaits thy hand,
(For what can war, but endless war still breed?)
Till truth and right from violence be freed,
And publick faith clear'd from the shameful brand
Of publick fraud. In vain doth Valour bleed,
While Avarice and Rapine share the land.

XI.

TO THE

LORD GENERAL CROMWELL.

CROMWELL our chief of men, who through a cloud
Not of war only, but detractions rude,
Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,
To peace and truth thy glorious way hast plough'd
And on the neck of crowned Fortune proud
Hast rear'd God's trophies, and his work pursued,
While Darwen stream, with blood of Scots imbrued,
And Dunbar field resounds thy praises loud,
And Worcester's laureat wreath. Yet much remains
To conquer still; Peace hath her victories
No less renown'd than War: New foes arise
Threatening to bind our souls with secular chains:
Help us to save free conscience from the paw
Of hireling wolves, whose gospel is their maw.

XII.

TO

SIR HENRY VANE, the Younger.

VANE, young in years, but in sage counsel old,
Than whom a better senator ne'er held
The helm of Rome, when gowns, not arms, repell'd
The fierce Epirot and the African bold;
Whether to settle peace, or to unfold
The drift of hollow States hard to be spell'd;
Then to advise how War may, best upheld,
Move by her two main nerves, iron and gold,
In all her equipage: besides to know
Both spiritual power and civil, what each means,
What severs each, thou hast learn'd, which few have done:
The bounds of either sword to thee we owe:
Therefore on thy firm hand Religion leans
In peace, and reckons thee her eldest son.

XIII.

On the late massacre in PIEMONT.

AVENGE, O Lord, thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones
Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold;
Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipt stocks and stones,
Forget not: in thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese that roll'd
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To Heaven. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple Tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundred fold, who, having learn'd thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

XIV.

ON HIS

BLINDNESS.

When I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide,
Lodg'd with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest he, returning, chide;
"Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?"
I fondly ask: But Patience to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need
"Either man's work, or his own gifts; who best
"Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best: his state
Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed,
"And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait."

XV.

TO

MR. LAWRENCE.

LAWRENCE, of virtuous father virtuous son,
Now that the fields are dank, and ways are mire,
Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire
Help waste a sullen day? what may be won
From the hard season gaining? Time will run
On smoother, till Favonius re-inspire
The frozen earth, and clothe in fresh attire
The li ly and rose, that neither sow'd nor spun.
What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice,
Of Attic taste, with wine, whence we may rise
To hear the lute well touch'd, or artful voice
Warble immortal notes and Tuscan air?
He who of those delights can judge and spare
To interpose them oft, is not unwise.

XVI.

TO

CYRIAC SKINNER.

CYRIAC, whose grandsire, on the royal bench
Of British Themis, with no mean applause
Pronounc'd, and in his volumes taught, our laws,
Which others at their bar so often wrench;
To day deep thoughts resolve with me to drench
In mirth that, after, no repenting draws;
Let Euclid rest, and Archimedes pause,
And what the Swede intends, and what the French.
To measure life learn thou betimes, and know
Toward solid good what leads the nearest way;
For other things mild Heaven a time ordains,
And disapproves that care, though wise in show,
That with superfluous burden loads the day,
And, when God sends a cheerful hour, refrains.

XVII.

TO THE SAME.

Cyriack, this three years day these eyes, though clear,
To outward view, of blemish or of spot,
Bereft of light, their seeing have forgot;
Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear
Of sun, or moon, or star, throughout the year,
Or man, or woman. Yet I argue not
Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot
Of heart or hope; but still bear up and steer
Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask?
The conscience, Friend, to have lost them overplied
In liberty's defence, my noble task,
Of which all Europe rings from side to side.
This thought might lead me through the world's vain mask
Content though blind, had I no better guide.

XVIII.

ON HIS

DECEASED WIFE.

METHOUGHT I saw my late espoused saint
Brought to me, like Alcestis, from the grave,
Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave,
Rescu'd from death by force, though pale and faint.
Mine, as whom wash'd from spot of child-bed taint
Purification in the old law did save,
And such, as yet once more I trust to have
Full sight of her in Heaven without restraint,
Came vested all in white, pure as her mind:
Her face was veil'd; yet to my fancied sight
Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shin'd
So clear, as in no face with more delight
But O, as to embrace me she inclin'd,
I wak'd; she fled; and day brought back my night.

ODES.

ODES.

ON

THE MORNING

OF

CHRIST'S NATIVITY.

This is the month, and this the happy morn,
Wherein the Son of Heaven's Eternal King,
Of wedded Maid and Virgin Mary born,
Our great redemption from above did bring;
For so the holy sages once did sing,
That he our deadly forfeit should release,
And with his Father work us a perpetual peace.

II.

That glorious form, that light unsufferable,
And that far-beaming blaze of majesty,
Wherewith he wont at Heaven's high council-table
To sit the midst of Trinal Unity,
He laid aside; and, here with us to be,
Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
And chose with us a darksome house of mortal clay.

III.

Say, heavenly Muse, shall not thy sacred vein
Afford a present to the Infant-God?
Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or solemn strain,
To welcome him to this his new abode,
Now while the heaven, by the sun's team untrod,
Hath took no print of the approaching light,
And all the spangled host keep watch in squadrons bright?

IV.

See, how from far, upon the eastern road,
The star-led wisards haste with odours sweet:
O run, prevent them with thy humble ode,
And lay it lowly at his blessed feet;
Have thou the honour first thy Lord to greet,
And join thy voice unto the Angel-quire,
From out his secret altar touch'd with hallow'd fire.

THE HYMN.

I.

It was the winter wild,
While the heaven-born child
All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies;
Nature, in awe to him,
Had doff'd her gaudy trim,
With her great Master so to sympathize:
It was no season then for her
To wanton with the sun, her lusty paramour.

II.

Only with speeches fair
She wooes the gentle air
To hide her guilty front with innocent snow;
And on her naked shame,
Pollute with sinful blame,
The saintly veil of maiden white to throw;
Confounded, that her Maker's eyes
Should look so near upon her foul deformities.

III.

But he, her fears to cease,
Sent down the meek-ey'd Peace;
She, crown'd with olive green, came softly sliding
Down through the turning sphere,
His ready harbinger,
With turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing;
And, waving wide her myrtle wand,
She strikes an universal peace through sea and land.

IV.

No war, or battle's sound,
Was heard the world around:
The idle spear and shield were high up hung;
The hooked chariot stood
Unstain'd with hostile blood;
The trumpet spake not to the armed throng;
And kings sat still with awful eye,
As if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by.

V.

But peaceful was the night,
Wherein the Prince of light
His reign of peace upon the earth began:
The winds, with wonder whist,
Smoothly the waters kist,
Whispering new joys to the mild ocean,
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmed wave.

VI.

The stars with deep amaze,
Stand fix'd in stedfast gaze,
Bending one way their precious influence;
And will not take their flight,
For all the morning light,
Or Lucifer that often warn'd them hence;
But in their glimmering orbs did glow,
Until their Lord himself bespake, and bid them go.

VII.

And, though the shady gloom
Had given day her room,
The sun himself withheld his wonted speed,
And hid his head for shame,
As his inferiour flame
The new-enlighten'd world no more should need;
He saw a greater sun appear
Than his bright throne, or burning axletree, could bear.

VIII.

The shepherds on the lawn,
Or e'er the point of dawn,
Sat simply chatting in a rustick row;
Full little thought they then,
That the mighty Pan
Was kindly come to live with them below;
Perhaps their loves, or else their sheep,
Was all that did their silly thoughts so busy keep.

IX.

When such musick sweet
Their hearts and ears did greet;
As never was by mortal finger strook;
Divinely-warbled voice
Answering the stringed noise,
As all their souls in blissful rapture took:
The air, such pleasure loth to lose,
With thousand echoes still prolongs each heavenly close.

X.

Nature that heard such sound,
Beneath the hollow round
Of Cynthia's seat, the aery region thrilling,
Now was almost won
To think her part was done,
And that her reign had here its last fulfilling;
She knew such harmony alone
Could hold all Heaven and earth in happier union.

XI.

At last surrounds their sight
A globe of circular light,
That with long beams the shamefac'd night array'd;
The helmed Cherubim,
And sworded Seraphim,
Are seen in glittering ranks with wings display'd,

Harping in loud and solemn quire,
With unexpressive notes, to Heaven's new-born
Heir.

XII.

Such musick (as 'tis said)
Before was never made,
But when of old the sons of morning sung,
While the Creator great
His constellations set,
And the well-balanc'd world on hinges hung;
And cast the dark foundations deep,
And bid the weltering waves their oozy channel keep.

XIII.

Ring out, ye crystal spheres,
Once bless our human ears,
If ye have power to touch our senses so;
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time;
And let the base of Heaven's deep organ blow;
And, with your ninefold harmony,
Make up full consort to the angelick symphony.

XIV.

For, if such holy song
Enwrap our fancy long,

Time will run back, and fetch the age of gold;
And speckled Vanity
Will sicken soon and die,
And leprous Sin will melt from earthly mould;
And Hell itself will pass away,
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day.

XV.

Yea, Truth and Justice then
Will down return to men,
Orb'd in a rainbow; and, like glories wearing,
Mercy will sit between,
Thron'd in celestial sheen,
With radiant feet the tissued clouds down steering;
And Heaven, as at some festival,
Will open wide the gates of her high palace hall.

XVI.

But wisest Fate says no,
This must not yet be so,
The Babe yet lies in smiling infancy,
That on the bitter cross
Must redeem our loss;
So both himself and us to glorify:
Yet first, to those ychain'd in sleep,
The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through
the deep;

XVII.

With such a horrid clang
As on mount Sinai rang,
While the red fire and smouldring clouds out brake:
The aged earth aghast,
With terrour of that blast,
Shall from the surface to the center shake;
When, at the world's last session,
The dreadful Judge in middle air shall spread his throne.

XVIII.

And then at last our bliss
Full and perfect is,
But now begins; for, from this happy day,
The old Dragon, under ground
In straiter limits bound,
Not half so far casts his usurped sway;
And, wroth to see his kingdom fail,
Swindges the scaly horrour of his folded tail.

XIX.

The oracles are dumb,
No voice or hideous hum
Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving.
Apollo from his shrine
Can no more divine,
With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving,

No nightly trance, or breathed spell,
Inspires the pale-ey'd priest from the prophetick cell.

XX.

The lonely mountains o'er,
And the resounding shore,
A voice of weeping heard and loud lament;
From haunted spring and dale,
Edg'd with poplar pale,
The parting Genius is with sighing sent;
With flower-inwoven tresses torn
The Nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

XXI.

In consecrated earth,
And on the holy hearth,
The Lars, and Lemures, moan with midnight plaint;
In urns, and altars round,
A drear and dying sound
Affrights the Flamens at their service quaint;
And the chill marble seems to sweat,
While each peculiar Power foregoes his wonted seat

XXII.

Peor and Baälim
Forsake their temples dim,

With that twice-batter'd God of Palestine;
And mooned Ashtaroth,
Heaven's queen and mother both,
Now sits not girt with tapers holy shine;
The Libyck Hammon shrinks his horn,
In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz mourn.

XXIII.

And sullen Moloch, fled,
Hath left in shadows dread
His burning idol all of blackest hue;
In vain with cymbals' ring
They call the grisly king,
In dismal dance about the furnace blue:
The brutish Gods of Nile as fast,
Isis, and Orus, and the dog Anubis, haste.

XXIV.

Nor is Osiris seen
In Memphian grove or green,
Trampling the unshower'd grass with lowings loud:
Nor can it be at rest
Within his sacred chest;
Nought but profoundest hell can be his shroud;
In vain with timbrell'd anthems dark
The sable-stoled sorcerers bear his worshipt ark.

XXV.

He feels from Juda's land
The dreaded Infant's hand,
The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyn;
Nor all the Gods beside
Longer dare abide,
Nor Typhon huge ending in snaky twine:
Our Babe, to shew his Godhead true,
Can in his swaddling bands controul the damned crew.

XXVI.

So, when the sun in bed,
Curtain'd with cloudy red,
Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,
The flocking shadows pale
Troop to the infernal jail,
Each fetter'd ghost slips to his several grave,
And the yellow-skirted Fayes
Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-lov'd maze.

XXVII

But see, the Virgin blest
Hath laid her Babe to rest;

Time is, our tedious song shall here have ending:
Heaven's youngest-teemed star
Hath fix'd her polish'd car,
Her sleeping Lord with handmaid lamp attending:
And all about the courtly stable
Bright-harness'd Angels sit in order serviceable.

THE PASSION.

I.

EREWHILE of musick, and ethereal mirth,
Wherewith the stage of air and earth did ring,
And joyous news of heavenly Infant's birth,
My Muse with Angels did divide to sing;
But headlong joy is ever on the wing,
In wintery solstice like the shorten'd light,
Soon swallow'd up in dark and long out-living night.

II.

For now to sorrow must I tune my song,
And set my harp to notes of saddest woe,
Which on our dearest Lord did seise ere long,
Dangers, and snares, and wrongs, and worse than so,
Which he for us did freely undergo:
Most perfect Hero, tried in heaviest plight
Of labours huge and hard, too hard for human wight!

III.

He, sovran priest, stooping his regal head,
That dropt with odorous oil down his fair eyes,
Poor fleshy tabernacle entered,
His starry front low-rooft beneath the skies:
O, what a mask was there, what a disguise!
Yet more; the stroke of death he must abide,
Then lies him meekly down fast by his brethrens' side.

IV.

These latest scenes confine my roving verse;
To this horizon is my Phœbus bound:
His god-like acts, and his temptations fierce,
And former sufferings, other where are found;
Loud o'er the rest Cremona's trump doth sound;
Me softer airs befit, and softer strings
Of lute, or viol still, more apt for mournful things.

V.

Befriend me, Night, best patroness of grief;
Over the pole thy thickest mantle throw,
And work my flatter'd fancy to belief,
That Heaven and Earth are colour'd with my woe;
My sorrows are too dark for day to know:

The leaves should all be black whereon I write,
And letters, where my tears have wash'd, a wannish white.

VI.

See, see the chariot, and those rushing wheels,
That whirl'd the Prophet up at Chebar flood;
My spirit some transporting Cherub feels,
To bear me where the towers of Salem stood,
Once glorious towers, now sunk in guiltless blood;
There doth my soul in holy vision sit,
In pensive trance, and anguish, and ecstatick fit.

VII.

Mine eye hath found that sad sepulchral rock
That was the casket of Heaven's richest store,
And here though grief my feeble hands up lock,
Yet on the soften'd quarry would I score
My plaining verse as lively as before;
For sure so well instructed are my tears,
That they would fitly fall in order'd characters.

VIII.

Or should I thence hurried on viewless wing
Take up a weeping on the mountains wild,
The gentle neighbourhood of grove and spring

Would soon unbosom all their echoes mild;
And I (for grief is easily beguil'd)
Might think the infection of my sorrows loud
Had got a race of mourners on some pregnant cloud.

The subject the Author finding to be above the years he had, when he wrote it, and nothing satisfied with what was begun, left it unfinished.

UPON THE

CIRCUMCISION.

Ye flaming Powers, and winged Warriours bright,
That erst with musick, and triumphant song,
First heard by happy watchful shepherds' ear,
So sweetly sung your joy the clouds along
Through the soft silence of the listening night;
Now mourn: and, if sad share with us to bear
Your fiery essence can distil no tear,
Burn in your sighs, and borrow
Seas wept from our deep sorrow:
He, who with all Heaven's heraldry whilere
Enter'd the world, now bleeds to give us ease;
Alas, how soon our sin
Sore doth begin
His infancy to seise!
O more exceeding love, or law more just?
Just law indeed, but more exceeding love!

For we, by rightful doom remediless,
Were lost in death, till he, that dwelt above
High thron'd in secret bliss, for us frail dust
Emptied his glory even to nakedness;
And that great covenant which we still transgress
Entirely satisfied;
And the full wrath beside
Of vengeful justice bore for our excess;
And seals obedience first, with wounding smart,
This day; but O! ere long,
Huge pangs and strong
Will pierce more near his heart.

ON THE

DEATH OF A FAIR INFANT,

DYING OF A COUGH.

I.

O FAIREST flower, no sooner blown but blasted,
Soft silken primrose fading timelessly,
Summer's chief honour, if thou hadst out-lasted
Bleak Winter's force that made thy blossom dry;
For he, being amorous on that lovely dye
That did thy cheek envermeil, thought to kiss,
But kill'd, alas! and then bewail'd his fatal bliss.

II.

For since grim Aquilo, his charioteer,
By boisterous rape the Athenian damsel got,
He thought it touch'd his deity full near,
If likewise he some fair one wedded not,
Thereby to wipe away the infamous blot

Of long-uncoupled bed and childless eld,
Which, 'mongst the wanton Gods, a foul reproach
was held.

III.

So mounting up in icy-pearled car,
Through middle empire of the freezing air
He wander'd long, till thee he spied from far;
There ended was his quest, there ceas'd his care:
Down he descended from his snow-soft chair,
But, all unwares, with his cold kind embrace
Unhous'd thy virgin soul from her fair biding place.

IV.

Yet art thou not inglorious in thy fate;
For so Apollo, with unweeting hand,
Whilom did slay his dearly-loved mate,
Young Hyacinth, born on Eurotas' strand,
Young Hyacinth, the pride of Spartan land;
But then transform'd him to a purple flower:
Alack, that so to change thee Winter had no power!

V.

Yet can I not persuade me thou art dead,
Or that thy corse corrupts in earth's dark womb,
Or that thy beauties lie in wormy bed,
Hid from the world in a low-delved tomb;
Could Heaven for pity thee so strictly doom?

Oh no! for something in thy face did shine
Above mortality, that show'd thou wast divine.

VI.

Resolve me then, oh Soul most surely blest,
(If so it be that thou these plaints dost hear;)
Tell me bright Spirit, where'er thou hoverest,
Whether above that high first-moving sphere,
Or in the Elysian fields, (if such there were;)
Oh say me true, if thou wert mortal wight,
And why from us so quickly thou didst take thy flight?

VII.

Wert thou some star which from the ruin'd roof
Of shak'd Olympus by mischance didst fall;
Which careful Jove in Nature's true behoof
Took up, and in fit place did reinstall?
Or did of late Earth's sons besiege the wall
Of sheeny Heaven, and thou, some Goddess fled,
Amongst us here below to hide thy nectar'd head?

VIII.

Or wert thou that just Maid, who once before
Forsook the hated earth, O tell me sooth,
And cam'st again to visit us once more?
Or wert thou Mercy, that sweet-smiling youth?

Or that crown'd matron sage white-robed Truth?
Or any other of that heavenly brood
Let down in cloudy throne to do the world some good?

IX.

Or wert thou of the golden-winged host,
Who, having clad thyself in human weed,
To earth from thy prefixed seat didst post,
And after short abode fly back with speed,
As if to shew what creatures heaven doth breed;
Thereby to set the hearts of men on fire
To scorn the sordid world, and unto heaven aspire?

X.

But oh! why didst thou not stay here below
To bless us with thy heaven-lov'd innocence,
To slake his wrath whom sin hath made our foe,
To turn swift-rushing black Perdition hence,
Or drive away the slaughtering Pestilence,
To stand 'twixt us and our deserved smart?
But thou canst best perform that office where thou art

XI.

Then thou, the Mother of so sweet a Child,
Her false-imagin'd loss cease to lament,

And wisely learn to curb thy sorrows wild;
Think what a present thou to God hast sent,
And render him with patience what he lent;
This if thou do, he will an offspring give,
That, till the world's last end, shall make thy name
to live.

ON TIME.

Fly, envious Time, till thou run out thy race;
Call on the lazy leaden-stepping hours,
Whose speed is but the heavy plummet's pace;
And glut thyself with what thy womb devours,
Which is no more than what is false and vain,
And merely mortal dross;
So little is our loss,
So little is thy gain!
For when as each thing bad thou hast entomb'd,
And last of all thy greedy self consum'd,
Then long Eternity shall greet our bliss
With an individual kiss;
And Joy shall overtake us as a flood,
When every thing that is sincerely good
And perfectly divine,
With Truth, and Peace, and Love, shall ever shine
About the supreme throne
Of him, to whose happy-making sight alone
When once our heavenly-guided soul shall clime;
Then, all this earthly grossness quit,
Attir'd with stars, we shall for ever sit,
Triumphing over Death, and Chance, and thee,
O Time.

AT A

SOLEMN MUSICK.

BLEST pair of Syrens, pledges of Heaven's joy,
Sphere-born harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse,
Wed your divine sounds, and mix'd power employ
Dead things with inbreath'd sense able to pierce;
And to our high-rais'd phantasy present
That undisturbed song of pure concent,
Aye sung before the sapphire-colour'd throne
To him that sits thereon,
With saintly shout, and solemn jubilee;
Where the bright Seraphim, in burning row,
Their loud up-lifted angel-trumpets blow;
And the cherubick host, in thousand quires,
Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,
With those just Spirits that wear victorious palms,
Hymns devout and holy psalms
Singing everlastingly:
That we on earth, with undiscording voice,
May rightly answer that melodious noise;
As once we did, till disproportion'd sin
Jarr'd against Nature's chime, and with harsh din

Broke the fair musick that all creatures made
To their great Lord, whose love their motion sway'd
In perfect diapason, whilst they stood
In first obedience, and their state of good.
O, may we soon again renew that song,
And keep in tune with Heaven, till God ere long
To his celestial consort us unite,
To live with him, and sing in endless morn of light!

AN

EPITAPH

ON THE

MARCHIONESS OF WINCHESTER.

This rich marble doth inter
The honour'd wife of Winchester,
A Viscount's daughter, an Earl's heir,
Besides what her virtues fair
Added to her noble birth,
More than she could own from earth.
Summers three times eight save one
She had told; alas! too soon,
After so short time of breath,
To house with darkness, and with death.
Yet had the number of her days
Been as complete as was her praise,
Nature and Fate had had no strife
In giving limit to her life.
  Her high birth, and her graces sweet,
Quickly found a lover meet;
The virgin quire for her request
The God that sits at marriage feast;

He at their invoking came,
But with a scarce well-lighted flame;
And in his garland, as he stood,
Ye might discern a cypress bud.
Once had the early matrons run
To greet her of a lovely son,
And now with second hope she goes,
And calls Lucina to her throes;
But, whether by mischance or blame,
Atropos for Lucina came;
And with remorseless cruelty
Spoil'd at once both fruit and tree:
The hapless babe, before his birth,
Had burial, yet not laid in earth;
And the languish'd mother's womb
Was not long a living tomb.
So have I seen some tender slip,
Sav'd with care from winter's nip,
The pride of her carnation train,
Pluck'd up by some unheedy swain,
Who only thought to crop the flower
New shot up from vernal shower;
But the fair blossom hangs the head
Side-ways, as on a dying bed,
And those pearls of dew, she wears,
Prove to be presaging tears,
Which the sad morn had let fall
On her hastening funeral.

Gentle Lady, may thy grave
Peace and quiet ever have;
After this thy travel sore
Sweet rest seize thee evermore,
That, to give the world encrease,
Shorten'd hast thy own life's lease.
Here, besides the sorrowing
That thy noble house doth bring,
Here be tears of perfect moan
Wept for thee in Helicon;
And some flowers, and some bays,
For thy herse, to strew the ways,
Sent thee from the banks of Came,
Devoted to thy virtuous name;
Whilst thou, bright Saint, high sitst in glory,
Next her, much like to thee in story,
That fair Syrian shepherdess,
Who, after years of barrenness,
The highly favour'd Joseph bore
To him that serv'd for her before,
And at her next birth, much like thee,
Through pangs fled to felicity,
Far within the bosom bright
Of blazing Majesty and Light:
There with thee, new welcome Saint,
Like fortunes may her soul acquaint,
With thee there clad in radiant sheen,
No Marchioness, but now a Queen.

SONG

ON

MAY MORNING.

Now the bright Morning-star, day's harbinger,
Comes dancing from the east, and leads with her
The flowery May, who from her green lap throws
The yellow cowslip and the pale primrose.
Hail, bounteous May, that dost inspire
Mirth, and youth, and warm desire;
Woods and groves are of thy dressing,
Hill, and dale, doth boast thy blessing.
Thus we salute thee with our early song,
And welcome thee, and wish thee long.

MISCELLANIES.

MISCELLANIES.

ANNO ÆTATIS XIX.

At a VACATION EXERCISE *in the* COLLEGE, part Latin, part English. *The Latin speeches ended, the English thus began.*

HAIL, native Language, that by sinews weak
Didst move my first endeavouring tongue to speak,
And mad'st imperfect words with childish trips,
Half unpronounc'd, slide through my infant-lips,
Driving dumb silence from the portal door,
Where he had mutely sat two years before:
Here I salute thee, and thy pardon ask,
That now I use thee in my latter task:
Small loss it is that thence can come unto thee,
I know my tongue but little grace can do thee:

Thou need'st not be ambitious to be first,
Believe me I have thither pack'd the worst:
And, if it happen as I did forecast,
The daintiest dishes shall be serv'd up last.
I pray thee then deny me not thy aid
For this same small neglect that I have made:
But haste thee straight to do me once a pleasure,
And from thy wardrobe bring thy chiefest treasure,
Not those new-fangled toys, and trimming slight
Which takes our late fantasticks with delight;
But cull those richest robes, and gay'st attire,
Which deepest spirits and choicest wits desire.
I have some naked thoughts that rove about,
And loudly knock to have their passage out;
And, weary of their place, do only stay,
Till thou hast deck'd them in thy best array;
That so they may, without suspect or fears,
Fly swiftly to this fair assembly's ears;
Yet I had rather, if I were to choose,
Thy service in some graver subject use,
Such as may make thee search thy coffers round,
Before thou clothe my fancy in fit sound:
Such where the deep transported mind may soar
Above the wheeling poles, and at Heaven's door
Look in, and see each blissful Deity
How he before the thunderous throne doth lie,
Listening to what unshorn Apollo sings
To the touch of golden wires, while Hebe brings

Immortal nectar to her kingly sire:
Then passing through the spheres of watchful fire,
And misty regions of wide air next under,
And hills of snow, and lofts of piled thunder,
May tell at length how green-ey'd Neptune raves,
In Heaven's defiance mustering all his waves;
Then sing of secret things that came to pass
When beldam Nature in her cradle was;
And last of kings, and queens, and heroes old,
Such as the wise Demodocus once told
In solemn songs at king Alcinous' feast,
While sad Ulysses' soul, and all the rest,
Are held, with his melodious harmony,
In willing chains and sweet captivity.
But fie, my wandering Muse, how thou dost stray!
Expectance calls thee now another way;
Thou know'st it must be now thy only bent
To keep in compass of thy predicament:
Then quick about thy purpos'd business come,
That to the next I may resign my room.

Then Ens is represented as father of the Predicaments his two sons, whereof the eldest stood for Substance with his canons, which Ens, thus speaking, explains.

Good luck befriend thee, Son; for, at thy birth,
The faery ladies danc'd upon the hearth;
Thy drowsy nurse hath sworn she did them spie
Come tripping to the room where thou didst lie,
And sweetly singing round about thy bed,
Strew all their blessings on thy sleeping head.
She heard them give thee this, that thou shouldst still
From eyes of mortals walk invisible:
Yet there is something that doth force my fear;
For once it was my dismal hap to hear
A Sibyl old, bow-bent with crooked age,
That far events full wisely could presage,
And, in time's long and dark prospective glass,
Foresaw what future days should bring to pass;
"Your son," said she, ("nor can you it prevent)
Shall subject be to many an Accident.
O'er all his brethren he shall reign as king,
Yet every one shall make him underling;

And those, that cannot live from him asunder,
Ungratefully shall strive to keep him under;
In worth and excellence he shall out-go them,
Yet being above them, he shall be below them;
From others he shall stand in need of nothing,
Yet on his brothers shall depend for clothing.
To find a foe it shall not be his hap,
And Peace shall lull him in her flowery lap;
Yet shall he live in strife, and at his door
Devouring War shall never cease to roar;
Yea, it shall be his natural property
To harbour those that are at enmity.
What power, what force, what mighty spell, if not
Your learned hands, can loose this Gordian knot?"

The next Quantity *and* Quality *spake in prose; then* Relation *was called by his name.*

RIVERS, arise; whether thou be the son
Of utmost Tweed, or Oose, or gulphy Dun,
Or Trent, who, like some Earth-born giant, spreads
His thirty arms along the indented meads;
Or sullen Mole, that runneth underneath;
Or Severn swift, guilty of maiden's death;
Or rocky Avon, or of sedgy Lee,
Or coaly Tine, or ancient hallow'd Dee;
Or Humber loud, that keeps the Scythian's name;
Or Medway smooth, or royal-tower'd Thame.

[*The rest was prose.*]

AN

EPITAPH

ON THE ADMIRABLE DRAMATICK POET,

W. SHAKSPEARE.

WHAT needs my Shakspeare, for his honour'd bones,
The labour of an age in piled stones?
Or that his hallow'd reliques should be hid
Under a star-ypointed pyramid?
Dear son of memory, great heir of fame,
What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name?
Thou, in our wonder and astonishment,
Hast built thyself a live-long monument.
For whilst, to the shame of slow endeavouring art,
Thy easy numbers flow; and that each heart
Hath, from the leaves of thy unvalued book,
Those Delphick lines with deep impression took;
Then thou, our fancy of itself bereaving,
Dost make us marble with too much conceiving;
And, so sepúlcher'd, in such pomp dost lie,
That kings, for such a tomb, would wish to die.

ON THE

UNIVERSITY CARRIER,

Who sickened in the time of his vacancy, being forbid to go to London, by reason of the plague.

HERE lies old Hobson; Death hath broke his girt,
And here, alas! hath laid him in the dirt;
Or else the ways being foul, twenty to one,
He's here stuck in a slough, and overthrown.
'Twas such a shifter, that, if truth were known,
Death was half glad when he had got him down;
For he had, any time this ten years full,
Dodg'd with him betwixt Cambridge and *The Bull.*
And surely Death could never have prevail'd,
Had not his weekly course of carriage fail'd;
But lately finding him so long at home,
And thinking now his journey's end was come,
And that he had ta'en up his latest inn,
In the kind office of a chamberlin
Show'd him his room where he must lodge that night,
Pull'd off his boots, and took away the light:
If any ask for him, it shall be sed,
"Hobson has supt, and's newly gone to bed."

Another, on the same.

HERE lieth one, who did most truly prove
That he could never die while he could move;
So hung his destiny, never to rot
While he might still jog on and keep his trot,
Made of sphere-metal, never to decay
Until his revolution was at stay.
Time numbers motion, yet (without a crime
'Gainst old truth) motion number'd out his time:
And like an engine, mov'd with wheel and weight,
His principles being ceas'd, he ended straight.
Rest, that gives all men life, gave him his death,
And too much breathing put him out of breath;
Nor were it contradiction to affirm,
Too long vacation hasten'd on his term.
Merely to drive the time away he sicken'd;
Fainted, and died, nor would with ale be quicken'd
"Nay," quoth he, on his swooning bed outstretch'd,
If I mayn't carry, sure I'll ne'er be fetch'd,
But vow, though the cross doctors all stood hearers,
For one carrier put down to make six bearers."

Ease was his chief disease; and to judge right,
He died for heaviness that his cart went light:
His leisure told him that his time was come
And lack of load made his life burdensome,
That even to his last breath, (there be that say't)
As he were press'd to death, he cried, More weight;
But, had his doings lasted as they were,
He had been an immortal carrier.
Obedient to the moon he spent his date
In course reciprocal, and had his fate
Link'd to the mutual flowing of the seas,
Yet (strange to think) his *wain* was his *encrease*:
His letters are deliver'd all and gone,
Only remains this superscription.

On the new Forcers of Conscience under the Long Parliament.

Because you have thrown off your Prelate Lord,
And with stiff vows renounc'd his Liturgy,
To seise the widow'd whore Plurality
From them whose sin ye envied, not abhor'd;
Dare ye for this adjure the civil sword
To force our consciences that Christ set free,
And ride us with a classick hierarchy
Taught ye by mere A. S. and Rotherford?
Men, whose life, learning, faith, and pure intent,
Would have been held in high esteem with Paul,
Must now be nam'd and printed Hereticks
By shallow Edwards and Scotch what d'ye call:
But we do hope to find out all your tricks,
Your plots and packing worse than those of Trent,
That so the Parliament,
May, with their wholesome and preventive shears,
Clip your phylacteries, though bauk your ears,
And succour our just fears.
When they shall read this clearly in your charge,
New Presbyter is but old Priest writ large.

TRANSLATIONS.

TRANSLATIONS.

THE FIFTH ODE OF HORACE,

LIB. I.

WHAT slender youth, bedew'd with liquid odours,
Courts thee on roses in some pleasant cave,
Pyrrha? For whom bind'st thou
In wreaths thy golden hair,
Plain in thy neatness? O, how oft shall he
On faith and changed Gods complain, and seas
Rough with black winds, and storms
Unwonted shall admire!
Who now enjoys thee credulous, all gold,
Who always vacant, always amiable
Hopes thee, of flattering gales
Unmindful. Hapless they,
To whom thou untried seem'st fair! Me, in vow'd
Picture, the sacred wall declares to have hung
My dank and dropping weeds
To the stern God of sea.

FROM

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH.

BRUTUS *thus addresses* DIANA *in the country of* LEOGECIA.

GODDESS of shades, and huntress, who at will
Walk'st on the rowling spheres, and through the deep;
On thy third reign, the earth, look now, and tell
What land, what seat of rest, thou bidst me seek,
What certain seat, where I may worship thee
For aye, with temples vow'd and virgin quires.

To whom, sleeping before the altar, DIANA *answers in a vision the same night.*

BRUTUS, far to the west, in the ocean wide,
Beyond the realm of Gaul, a land there lies,
Sea-girt it lies, where giants dwelt of old;
Now void, it fits thy people: Thither bend
Thy course: there shalt thou find a lasting seat;
There to thy sons another Troy shall rise,
And kings be born of thee, whose dreadful might
Shall awe the world, and conquer nations bold.

From Dante.

Ah Constantine, of how much ill was cause,
Not thy conversion, but those rich domains
That the first wealthy pope receiv'd of thee.

From Dante.

Founded in chaste and humble poverty,
'Gainst them that rais'd thee dost thou lift thy horn,
Impudent whore? where hast thou plac'd thy hope
In thy adulterers, or thy ill-got wealth?
Another Constantine comes not in haste.

From Ariosto.

Then pass'd he to a flowery mountain green,
Which once smelt sweet, now stinks as odiously:
This was the gift, if you the truth will have,
That Constantine to good Sylvester gave.

From Horace.

Whom do we count a good man? Whom but he
Who keeps the laws and statutes of the senate,
Who judges in great suits and controversies,
Whose witness and opinion wins the cause?
But his own house, and the whole neighbourhood,
Sees his foul inside through his whited skin.

From Euripides.

This is true liberty, when freeborn men,
Having to advise the public, may speak free;
Which he who can, and will, deserves high praise:
Who neither can, nor will, may hold his peace;
What can be a juster in a state than this?

From Horace.

—— Laughing, to teach the truth,
What hinders? As some teachers give to boys
Junkets and knacks, that they may learn apace.

From Horace.

—— Joking decides great things,
Stronger and better oft than earnest can.

From Sophocles.

'Tis you that say it, not I. You do the deeds,
And your ungodly deeds find me the words.

From Seneca.

—— There can be slain
No sacrifice to God more acceptable,
Than an unjust and wicked king.

PSALM I.

DONE INTO VERSE, 1653.

BLESSED is the man who hath not walk'd astray
In counsel of the wicked, and i' the way
Of sinners hath not stood, and in the seat
Of scorners hath not sat. But in the great
Jehovah's law is ever his delight,
And in his law he studies day and night.
He shall be as a tree which planted grows
By watery streams, and in his season knows
To yield his fruit, and his leaf shall not fall,
And what he takes in hand shall prosper all.
Not so the wicked, but as chaff which fann'd
The wind drives, so the wicked shall not stand
In judgement, or abide their trial then,
Nor sinners in the assembly of just men.
For the Lord knows the upright way of the just,
And the way of bad men to ruin must.

PSALM II.

Done Aug. 8, 1653. *Terzetti.*

WHY do the Gentiles tumult, and the Nations
Muse a vain thing, the kings of the earth unstand
With power, and princes in their congregations
Lay deep their plots together through each land
Against the Lord and his Messiah dear?
Let us break off, say they, by strength of hand
Their bonds, and cast from us, no more to wear,
Their twisted cords: He, who in heaven doth dwell,
Shall laugh; the Lord shall scoff them; then severe,
Speak to them in his wrath, and in his fell
And fierce ire trouble them; but I, saith he,
Anointed have my King (though ye rebel)
On Sion my holy hill. A firm decree
I will declare: The Lord to me hath said,
Thou art my Son, I have begotten thee
This day; ask of me, and the grant is made;
As thy possession I on thee bestow
The Heathen; and, as thy conquest to be sway'd,

Earth's utmost bounds: them shalt thou bring full
low
With iron scepter bruis'd, and them disperse
Like to a potter's vessel shiver'd so.
And now be wise at length, ye kings averse,
Be taught, ye Judges of the earth; with fear
Jehovah serve, and let your joy converse
With trembling; kiss the Son lest he appear
In anger, and ye perish in the way,
If once his wrath take fire, like fuel sere.
Happy all those who have in him their stay.

PSALM III.

Aug. 9, 1653.

WHEN HE FLED FROM ABSALOM.

LORD, how many are my foes!
How many those,
That in arms against me rise!
Many are they,
That of my life distrustfully thus say;
No help for him in God there lies.
But thou, Lord, art my shield, my glory,
Thee, through my story,
The exalter of my head I count;
Aloud I cried
Unto Jehovah, he full soon replied,
And heard me from his holy mount.
I lay and slept; I wak'd again;
For my sustain
Was the Lord. Of many millions
The populous rout
I fear not, though, encamping round about,
They pitch against me their pavilions.
Rise, Lord; save me, my God; for thou
Hast smote ere now
On the cheek-bone all my foes,
Of men abhorr'd
Hast broke the teeth. This help was from the Lord;
Thy blessing on thy people flows.

PSALM IV.

Aug. 10, 1653.

Answer me when I call,
God of my righteousness;
In straights, and in distress,
Thou didst me disenthrall
And set at large; now spare,
  Now pity me, and hear my earnest prayer.
Great ones, how long will ye
My glory have in scorn?
How long be thus forborn
Still to love vanity?
To love, to seek, to prize,
  Things false and vain, and nothing else but lies?
Yet know the Lord hath chose,
Chose to himself apart,
The good and meek of heart;
(For whom to choose he knows)
Jehovah from on high
  Will hear my voice, what time to him I cry.
Be aw'd and do not sin;
Speak to your hearts alone,
Upon your beds, each one,

And be at peace within.
Offer the offerings just
  Of righteousness, and in Jehovah trust.
Many there be that say,
Who yet will show us good?
Talking like this world's brood;
But, Lord, thus let me pray;
On us lift up the light,
  Lift up the favour of thy countenance bright.
Into my heart more joy
And gladness thou hast put,
Than when a year of glut
Their stores doth over-cloy,
And from their plenteous grounds
  With vast encrease their corn and wine abounds.
In peace at once will I
Both lay me down and sleep;
For thou alone dost keep
Me safe where'er I lie;
As in a rocky cell
  Thou, Lord, alone, in safety mak'st me dwell.

PSALM V.

Aug. 12, 1653.

JEHOVAH, to my words give ear,
My meditation weigh;
The voice of my complaining hear,
My King and God; for unto thee I pray.
Jehovah, thou my early voice
Shalt in the morning hear;
I' the morning I to thee with choice
Will rank my prayers, and watch till thou appear.
For thou art not a God that takes
In wickedness delight;
Evil with thee no biding makes;
Fools or mad men stand not within thy sight.
All workers of iniquity
Thou hat'st; and them unblest
Thou wilt destroy that speak a lye;
The bloody and guileful man God doth detest.
But I will, in thy mercies dear,
Thy numerous mercies, go
Into thy house; I, in thy fear,
Will towards thy holy temple worship low.
Lord, lead me in thy righteousness,
Lead me, because of those
That do observe if I transgress;
Set thy ways right before, where my step goes.

For, in his faltering mouth unstable,
No word is firm or sooth;
Their inside, troubles miserable;
An open grave their throat, their tongue they smooth.
God, find them guilty, let them fall
By their own counsels quell'd;
Push them in their rebellions all
Still on; for against thee they have rebell'd.
Then all, who trust in thee, shall bring
Their joy; while thou from blame
Defend'st them they shall ever sing
And shall triúmph in thee, who love thy name.
For thou, Jehovah, wilt be found
To bless the just man still;
As with a shield, thou wilt surround
Him with thy lasting favour and good will.

PSALM VI.

Aug. 13, 1653.

LORD, in thine anger do not reprehend me,
Nor in thy hot displeasure me correct;
Pity me, Lord, for I am much deject,
And very weak and faint; heal and amend me:
For all my bones, that even with anguish ake,
Are troubled, yea my soul is troubled sore,
And thou, O Lord, how long? Turn, Lord: restore
My soul; O save me for thy mercies sake:
For in death no remembrance is of thee;
Who in the grave can celebrate thy praise?
Wearied I am with sighing out my days:
Nightly my couch I make a kind of sea;
My bed I water with my tears; mine eye
Through grief consumes, is waxen old and dark
I' the midst of all mine enemies that mark.
Depart from me; for the voice of my weeping
The Lord hath heard; the Lord hath heard my prayer;
My supplication with acceptance fair

The Lord will own, and have me in his keeping.
Mine enemies shall all be blank, and dash'd
With much confusion; then, grown red with shame,
They shall return in haste the way they came,
And in a moment shall be quite abash'd.

PSALM VII.

Aug. 14, 1653.

Upon the words of Chush the Benjamite against him.

LORD, my God, to thee I fly;
Save me and secure me under
Thy protection, while I cry;
Lest, as a lion, (and no wonder)
He haste to tear my soul asunder,
Tearing, and no rescue nigh.

Lord, my God, if I have thought
Or done this; if wickedness
Be in my hands; if I have wrought
Ill to him that meant me peace;
Or to him have render'd less,
And not freed my foe for nought;

Let the enemy pursue my soul,
And overtake it; let him tread
My life down to the earth, and roll
In the dust my glory dead,
In the dust; and, there out-spread,
Lodge it with dishonour foul.

Rise, Jehovah, in thine ire,
Rouse thyself amidst the rage
Of my foes that urge like fire;
And wake for me, their fury asswage;
Judgment here thou didst engage
And command, which I desire.

So the assemblies of each nation
Will surround thee, seeking right;
Thence to thy glorious habitation
Return on high, and in their sight.
Jehovah judgeth most upright
All people from the world's foundation.

Judge me, Lord; be judge in this
According to my righteousness,
And the innocence which is
Upon me: cause at length to cease
Of evil men the wickedness
And their power that do amiss.

But the just establish fast,
Since thou art the just God, that tries
Hearts and reins. On God is cast
My defence, and in him lies,
In him who, both just and wise,
Saves the upright of heart at last.

God is a just judge and severe,
And God is every day offended;
If the unjust will not forbear,
His sword he whets, his bow hath bended
Already, and for him intended
The tools of death, that waits him near.

(His arrows purposely made he
For them that persecute.) Behold,
He travels big with vanity;
Trouble he hath conceiv'd of old,
As in a womb; and from that mould
Hath at length brought forth a lie.

He digg'd a pit, and delv'd it deep,
And fell into the pit he made;
His mischief, that due course doth keep,
Turns on his head; and his ill trade
Of violence will, undelay'd,
Fall on his crown with ruin steep.

Then will I Jehovah's praise,
According to his justice raise,
And sing the Name and Deity
Of Jehovah the Most High.

PSALM VIII.

Aug. 14. 1653.

O JEHOVAH our Lord, how wonderous great
And glorious is thy Name through all the earth!
So as above the heavens thy praise to set
Out of the tender mouths of latest birth.

Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou
Hast founded strength, because of all thy foes,
To stint the enemy, and slack the avenger's brow,
That bends his rage thy Providence to oppose.

When I behold thy heavens, thy fingers' art,
The moon, and stars, which thou so bright hast set
In the pure firmament; then saith my heart,
O, what is man that thou remembrest yet,

And think'st upon him; or of man begot,
That him thou visit'st, and of him art found!
Scarce to be less than God's thou mad'st his lot,
With honour and with state thou hast him crown'd.

O'er the works of thy hand thou mad'st him Lord,
  Thou hast put all under his lordly feet;
All flocks, and herds, by thy commanding word,
  All beasts, that in the field, or forest meet.

Fowl of the heavens, and fish that through the wet
  Sea-paths in shoals do slide, and know no dearth,
O Jehovah our Lord, how wonderous great
  And glorious is thy Name through all the earth!

April, 1648. J. M.

Nine of the Psalms done into metre, wherein all, but what is in a different character, are the very words of the text, translated from the original.

PSALM LXXX.

1. Thou Shepherd, that dost Israel *keep*
Give ear *in time of need?*
Who leadest like a flock of sheep
Thy lóved Joseph's seed;
That sitt'st between the Cherubs *bright,*
Between their wings out-spread;
Shine forth, *and from thy cloud give light,*
And on our foes thy dread.

2. In Ephraim's view and Benjamin's,
And in Manasse's sight,
Awake thy strength, come, and *be seen*
To save us *by thy might.*

3. Turn us again, *thy grace divine*
To us, O God, *vouchsafe;*

Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
And then we shall be safe.

4. Lord God of Hosts, how long wilt thou,
How long wilt thou declare
Thy smoking wrath, *and angry brow*
Against thy people's prayer!

5. Thou feed'st them with the bread of tears;
Their bread with tears they eat;
And mak'st them largely drink the tears
Wherewith their cheeks are wet.

6. A strife thou mak'st us *and a prey*
To every neighbour foe;
Among themselves they laugh, they play,
And flouts at us they throw.

7. Return us, *and thy grace divine,*
O God of Hosts, *vouchsafe;*
Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
And then we shall be safe.

8. A vine from Egypt thou hast brought,
Thy free love made it thine,
And drov'st out nations, *proud and haut,*
To plant this *lovely* vine.

9 Thou didst prepare for it a place,
And root it deep and fast,
That it *began to grow apace,*
And fill'd the land *at last.*

10. With her *green* shade that cover'd *all,*
The hills were *over-spread;*
Her boughs as *high as* cedars tall.
Advanc'd their lofty head.

11. Here branches *on the western side*
Down to the sea she sent,
And *upward* to that river *wide*
Her other branches *went.*

12. Why hast thou laid her hedges low,
And broken down her fence,
That all may pluck her, as they go,
With rudest violence?

13. The *tusked* boar out of the wood
Up turns it by the roots;
Wild beasts there brouze, and make their food
Her grapes and tender shoots.

14. Return now, God of Hosts, look down
From Heaven, thy seat divine;
Behold *us, but without a frown,*
And visit this *thy* vine.

15. Visit this vine which thy right hand
Hath set, and planted *long*,
And the young branch, that for thyself
Thou hast made firm and strong.

16. But now it is consum'd with fire,
And cut *with axes* down;
They perish at thy dreadful ire,
At thy rebuke and frown.

17. Upon the man of thy right hand
Let thy *good* hand be *laid*;
Upon the son of man, whom thou
Strong for thyself hast made.

18. So shall we not go back from thee
To ways of sin and shame;
Quicken us thou; then *gladly* we
Shall call upon thy Name.

19. Return us, *and thy grace divine*,
Lord God of Hosts, *vouchsafe*;
Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
And then we shall be safe.

PSALM LXXXI.

1. To God our strength sing loud, *and clear,*
Sing loud to God *our King;*
To Jacob's God, *that all may hear,*
Loud acclamations ring.

2. Prepare a hymn, prepare a song,
The timbrel hither bring;
The *cheerful* psaltery bring along,
And harp *with* pleasant *string.*

3. Blow, *as is wont,* in the new moon
With trumpets' *lofty sound,*
The appointed time, the day whereon
Our solemn feast *comes round.*

4. This was a statute *given of old*
For Israel *to observe;*
A law of Jacob's God, *to hold,*
From whence they might not swerve.

5. This he a testimony ordain'd
In Joseph, *not to change,*

When as he pass'd through Egypt land;
The tongue I heard was strange.

6. From burden, *and from slavish toil,*
I set his shoulder free:
His hands from pots, *and miry soil,*
Deliver'd were *by me.*

7. When trouble did thee sore assail,
On me then didst thou call;
And I to free thee *did not fail,*
And led thee out of thrall.
I answer'd thee in thunder deep,
With clouds encompass'd round;
I tried thee at the water *steep*
Of Meriba *renown'd.*

8. Hear, O my People, *hearken well;*
I testify to thee,
Thou ancient stock of Israel,
If thou wilt list to me:

9. Throughout the land of thy abode
No alien God shall be,
Nor shalt thou to a foreign God
In honour bend thy knee.

10. I am the Lord thy God which brought
Thee out of Egypt land;
Ask large enough, and I, *besought*,
Will grant thy full demand.

11. And yet my people would not *hear*,
Nor hearken to my voice;
And Israel, *whom I lov'd so dear*,
Mislik'd me for his choice.

12. Then did I leave them to their will,
And to their wandering mind;
Their own conceits they follow'd still,
Their own devices blind.

13. O, that my people would *be wise*,
To serve me *all their days!*
And O, that Israel would *advise*
To walk my *righteous* ways!

14. Then would I soon bring down their foes,
That now so proudly rise;
And turn my hand against *all those*,
That are their enemies.

15. Who hate the Lord should *then be fain*
To bow to him and bend;

But *they, his people, should remain,*
Their time should have no end.

16. And he would feed them *from the shock*
With flower of finest wheat,
And satisfy them from the rock
With honey *for their meat.*

PSALM LXXXII.

1. God in the great assembly stands
Of kings and lordly states;
Among the Gods, on both his hands,
He judges and debates.

2. How long will ye pervert the right
With judgement false and wrong,
Favouring the wicked *by your might,*
Who thence grow bold and strong?

3. Regard the weak and fatherless,
Despatch the poor man's cause;
And raise the man in deep distress
By just and equal laws.

4. Defend the poor and desolate,
And rescue from the hands
Of wicked men the low estate
Of him *that help demands.*

5. They know not, nor will understand,
In darkness they walk on;

The earth's foundations all are mov'd,
And out of order gone.

6. I said that ye were Gods, yea all
The sons of God Most High;
7. But ye shall die like men, and fall
As other princes *die*.

8. Rise, God; judge thou the earth *in might*,
This *wicked* earth redress;
For thou art he who shall by right
The nations all possess.

PSALM LXXXIII.

1. Be not thou silent *now at length,*
O God, hold not thy peace;
Sit thou not still, O God of *strength,*
We cry, and do not cease.

2. For lo, thy *furious* foes *now* swell,
And storm outrageously;
And they that hate thee, *proud and fell,*
Exalt their heads full high.

3. Against thy people they contrive
Their plots and counsels deep;
Them to ensnare they chiefly strive,
Whom thou dost hide and keep.

4. Come, let us cut them off, say they,
Till they no nation be;
That Israel's name for ever may
Be lost in memory.

5. For they consult with all their might,
And all, as one in mind,

Themselves against thee they unite,
And in firm union bind.

6. The tents of Edom, and the brood
Of *scornful* Ishmael,
Moab, with them of Hagar's brood
That in the desart dwell,

7. Gebal and Ammon *there conspire,*
And *hateful* Amalec,
The Philistines, and they of Tyre,
Whose bounds the sea doth check.

8. With them *great* Ashur also bands,
And doth confirm the knot:
All these have lent their armed hands
To aid the sons of Lot.

9. Do to them as to Midian *bold,*
That wasted all the coast;
To Sisera; and, as *is told,*
Thou didst to Jabin's *host,*
When, at the brook of Kishon old,
They were repuls'd and slain,

10. At Endor quite cut off, and roll'd
As dung upon the plain.

11. As Zeb and Oreb evil sped,
So let their princes speed;
As Zeba and Zalmunna *bled*,
So let their princes *bleed*.

12. *For they amidst their pride* have said,
By right now shall we seise
God's houses, and *will now invade*
Their stately palaces.

13. My God, oh make them as a wheel,
No quiet let them find;
Giddy and *restless* let *them reel*
Like stubble from the wind.

14. As *when* an *aged* wood takes fire
Which on a sudden strays,
The *greedy* flame runs higher and higher
Till all the mountains blaze;

15. So with thy whirlwind them pursue,
And with thy tempest chase;

16. And, till they yield thee honour due,
Lord, fill with shame their face.

17. Asham'd, and troubled, let them be,
Troubled, and sham'd for ever;

Ever confounded, and so die
With shame, *and 'scape it never.*

18. Then shall they know, that Thou, whose Name
Jehovah is alone,
Art the Most High, *and Thou the same*
O'er all the earth *art One.*

PSALM LXXXIV.

1. How lovely are thy dwellings fair!
O Lord of Hosts, how dear
The *pleasant* tabernacles are,
Where thou dost dwell so near!

2. My soul doth long and almost die
Thy courts, O Lord, to see;
My heart and flesh aloud do cry,
O living God, for thee.

3. There even now the sparrow, *freed from wrong,*
Hath found a house of *rest;*
The swallow there, to lay her young
Hath built her *brooding* nest;
Even by the altars, Lord of Hosts,
They find their safe abode;
And home they fly from round the coasts
Toward thee, my King, my God.

4. Happy, who in thy house reside,
Where thee they ever praise!

5. Happy, whose strength in thee doth bide,
And in their hearts thy ways!

6. They pass through Baca's *thirsty* vale,
That dry and barren ground;
As through a fruitful watery dale,
Where springs and showers abound.

7. They journey on from strength to strength
With joy and gladsome cheer,
Till all before *our* God *at length*
In Sion do appear.

8. Lord God of Hosts, hear *now* my prayer,
O Jacob's God give ear;

9. Thou God, our shield, look on the face
Of thy anointed *dear.*

10. For one day in thy courts *to be*
Is better, *and more blest,*
Than *in the joys of vanity*
A thousand days *at best.*
I, in the temple of my God,
Had rather keep a door,
Than dwell in tents, *and rich abode,*
With sin *for evermore.*

11. For God the Lord, both sun and shield,
Gives grace and glory *bright;*
No good from them shall be witheld
Whose ways are just and right.

12. Lord *God* of Hosts, *that reign'st on high;*
That man is *truly* blest,
Who *only* on thee doth rely,
And in thee only rest.

PSALM LXXXV.

1. Thy land to favour graciously
Thou hast not Lord been slack;
Thou hast from *hard* captivity
Returned Jacob back.

2. The iniquity thou didst forgive
That wrought thy people woe;
And as their sin, *that did thee grieve,*
Hast hid, *where none shall know.*

3. Thine anger all thou hadst remov'd,
And *calmly* didst return
From thy fierce wrath which we had prov'd
Far worse than fire to burn.

4. God of our saving health and peace,
Turn us, and us restore;
Thine indignation cause to cease
Towards us, *and chide no more.*

5. Wilt thou be angry without end,
For ever angry thus?

Wilt thou thy frowning ire extend
From age to age on us?

6. Wilt thou not turn and *hear our voice,*
And us again revive,
That so thy people may rejoice
By thee preserv'd alive?

7. Cause us to see thy goodness, Lord,
To us thy mercy shew;
Thy saving health to us afford,
And life in us renew.

8. *And now,* what God the Lord will speak,
I will *go straight and* hear,
For to his people he speaks peace,
And to his saints *full dear,*
To his dear saints he will speak peace;
But let them never more
Return to folly, *but surcease*
To trespass as before.

9. Surely, to such as do him fear
Salvation is at hand;
And glory shall *ere long appear*
To dwell within our land.

10. Mercy and Truth, *that long were miss'd*
Now *joyfully* are met;
Sweet Peace and Righteousness have kiss'd,
And hand in hand are set.

11. Truth from the earth, *like to a flower,*
Shall bud and blossom *then;*
And Justice, from her heavenly bower,
Look down *on mortal men.*

12. The Lord will also then bestow
Whatever thing is good;
Our land shall forth in plenty throw
Her fruits *to be our food.*

13. Before him Righteousness shall go;
His royal Harbinger:
Then will he come, and not be slow,
His footsteps cannot err.

PSALM LXXXVI.

1. Thy *gracious* ear, O Lord, incline,
O hear me, *I thee pray;*
For I am poor, and almost pine
With need, *and sad decay.*

2. Preserve my soul; for I have trod
Thy ways, and love the just;
Save thou thy servant, O my God,
Who *still* in thee doth trust.

3. Pity me, Lord, for daily thee
I call; 4. O make rejoice
Thy servant's soul; for Lord, to thee
I lift my soul *and voice.*

5. For thou art good, thou, Lord, are prone
To pardon, thou to all
Art full of mercy, thou *alone*
To them that on thee call.

6. Unto my supplication, Lord,
Give ear, and to the cry
Of my *incessant* prayers afford
Thy hearing graciously.

7. I, in the day of my distress,
Will call on the thee *for aid;*
For thou wilt *grant* me *free access,*
And answer *what I pray'd.*

8. Like thee among the Gods is none,
O Lord; nor any works
Of all that other Gods have done
Like to thy *glorious* works.

9. The Nations all whom thou hast made
Shall come, *and all shall frame*
To bow them low before thee, Lord,
And glorify thy Name.

10. For great thou art, and wonders great
By thy strong hand are done;
Thou, *in thy everlasting seat,*
Remainest God alone.

11. Teach me, O Lord, thy way *most right;*
I in thy truth will bide;
To fear thy Name my heart unite,
So shall it never slide.

12. Thee will I praise, O Lord my God,
Thee honour and adore

With my whole heart, and blaze abroad
Thy name for evermore.

13. For great thy mercy is toward me,
And thou hast freed my soul,
Even from the lowest hell set free,
From deepest darkness foul.

14. O God, the proud against me rise,
And violent men are met
To seek my life, and in their eyes
No fear of thee have set.

15. But thou, Lord, art the God most mild,
Readiest thy grace to shew,
Slow to be angry, and *art styl'd*
Most merciful, most true.

16. O, turn to me *thy face at length*,
And me have mercy on;
Unto thy servant give thy strenght,
And save thy handmaid's son.

17. Some sign of good to me afford,
And let my foes *then* see,
And be asham'd; because thou, Lord,
Dost help and comfort me.

PSALM LXXXVII.

1. Among the holy mountains *high*
Is his foundation fast;
There seated in his sanctuary,
His temple there is plac'd.

2. Sion's *fair* gates the Lord loves more
Than all the dwellings *fair*
Of Jacob's *land, though there be store,*
And all within his care.

3. City of God, most glorious things
Of thee *abroad* are spoke;

4. I mention Egypt, *where proud kings*
Did our forefathers yoke.
I mention Babel to my friends,
Philistia *full of scorn;*
And Tyre with Ethiops' *utmost ends,*
Lo this man there was born:

5. But *twice that praise shall in our ear*
Be said of Sion *last;*

This and this man was born in her;
High God shall fix her fast.

6. The Lord shall write it in a scroll
That ne'er shall be out-worn,
When he the nations doth inroll,
That this man there was born.

7. Both they who sing, and they who dance,
With sacred songs are there ;
In thee *fresh brooks, and soft streams glance,*
And all my fountains *clear.*

PSALM LXXXVIII.

1. LORD God, that dost me save and keep,
   All day to thee I cry;
And all night long before thee *weep,*
   Before thee *prostrate lie.*
2. Into thy presence let my prayer
   With sighs devout ascend;
And to my cries, that *ceaseless are,*
   Thine ear with favour bend.
3. For, cloy'd with woes and trouble sore,
   Surcharg'd my soul doth lie;
My life, *at Death's unchearful door,*
   Unto the grave draws nigh.
4. Reckon'd I am with them that pass
   Down to the *dismal* pit;
I am a man, but weak alas!
   And for that name unfit.
5. From life discharg'd and parted quite,
   Among the dead to *sleep;*
And like the slain in *bloody fight,*
   That in the grave lie *deep.*

Whom thou rememberest no more,
Dost never more regard,
Them, from thy hand deliver'd o'er,
Death's hideous house hath barr'd.
6. Thou in the lowest pit *profound*
Hast set me *all forlorn,*
Where thickest darkness *hovers round,*
In horrid deeps *to mourn.*
7. Thy wrath, *from which no shelter saves,*
Full sore doth press on me;
Thou break'st upon me all thy waves,
And all thy waves break me.
8. Thou dost my friends from me estrange,
And mak'st me odious,
Me to them odious, *for they change,*
And I here pent up thus.
9. Through sorrow, and affliction great,
Mine eye grows dim and dead;
Lord, all the day I thee entreat,
My hands to thee I spread.
10. Wilt thou do wonders on the dead?
Shall the deceas'd arise,
And praise thee *from their loathsome bed,*
With pale and hollow eyes?
11. Shall they thy loving kindness tell,
On whom the grave *hath hold?*
Or they, who in perdition *dwell,*
Thy faithfulness *unfold?*

12. In darkness can thy mighty *hand*
Or wonderous acts be known?
Thy justice in the *gloomy* land
Of *dark* oblivion?
13. But I to thee, O Lord, do cry,
Ere yet my life be spent;
And *up to thee* my prayer *doth hie,*
Each morn, and thee prevent.
14. Why wilt thou, Lord, my soul forsake,
And hide thy face from me,
15. That am already bruis'd, and shake
With terrour sent from thee?
Bruis'd, and afflicted, and *so low*
As ready to expire;
While I thy terrours undergo,
Astonish'd with thine ire.
16. Thy fierce wrath over me doth flow;
Thy threatenings cut me through:
17. All day they round about me go,
Like waves they me pursue.
18. Lover and friend thou hast remov'd,
And sever'd from me far:
They *fly me now* whom I have lov'd,
And as in darkness are.

A PARAPHRASE on PSALM CXIV.

This and the following Psalm were done by the Author at fifteen years old.

WHEN the blest seed of Terah's faithful son,
After long toil, their liberty had won;
And past from Pharian fields to Canaan land,
Led by the strength of the Almighty's hand;
Jehovah's wonders were in Israel shown,
His praise and glory was in Israel known.
That saw the troubled Sea, and shivering fled,
And sought to hide his froth-becurled head
Low in the earth; Jordan's clear streams recoil,
As a faint host, that hath receiv'd the foil.
The high huge-bellied mountains skip, like rams
Amongst the ewes; the little hills, like lambs.
Why fled the ocean? And why skipt the mountains?
Why turned Jordan toward his crystal fountains?
Shake, Earth; and at the presence be aghast
Of Him that ever was, and aye shall last;
That glassy floods from rugged rocks can crush,
And make soft rills from fiery flint-stones gush!

PSALM CXXXVI.

Let us, with a gladsome mind,
Praise the Lord, for he is kind;
  For his mercies aye endure,
  Ever faithful, ever sure.
Let us blaze his name abroad,
For of Gods he is the God.
  For his &c.
O, let us his praises tell,
Who doth the wrathful tyrants quell.
  For his &c.
Who with his miracles doth make
Amazed Heaven, and Earth to shake.
  For his &c.
Who, by his wisdom, did create
The painted heavens so full of state.
  For his &c.

Who did the solid earth ordain
To rise above the watry plain.
For his &c.
Who, by his all-commanding might,
Did fill the new-made world with light.
For his &c.
And caus'd the golden-tressed sun
All the day long his course to run.
For his &c.
The horned moon to shine by night,
Amongst her spangled sisters bright.
For his &c.
He, with his thunder-clasping hand,
Smote the first-born of Egypt land,
For his &c.
And in despite of Pharaoh fell,
He brought from thence his Israël.
For his &c.
The ruddy waves he cleft in twain
Of the Erythræan main.
For his &c.
The floods stood still, like walls of glass,
While the Hebrew bands did pass.
For his &c.
But full soon they did devour
The tawny king with all his power.
For his &c.

His chosen people he did bless
In the wasteful wilderness.
  For his &c.
In bloody battle he brought down
Kings of prowess and renown.
  For his &c.
He foil'd bold Seon and his host,
That rul'd the Amorrëan coast.
  For his &c.
And large-limb'd Og he did subdue,
With all his over-hardy crew.
  For his &c.
And, to his servant Israël,
He gave their land therein to dwell.
  For his &c.
He hath, with a piteous eye,
Beheld us in our misery.
  For his &c.
And freed us from the slavery
Of the invading enemy.
  For his &c.
All living creatures he doth feed,
And with full hand supplies their need.
  For his &c.
Let us therefore warble forth
His mighty majesty and worth.
  For his &c.

That his mansion hath on high
Above the reach of mortal eye.
For his mercies aye endure,
Ever faithful, ever sure.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

NUMBER I.

CONSIDERING it as a duty incumbent on me to preserve a brief history of Cowper's compositions relating to Milton, I annex the following, which appeared as a Preface to the first edition of his Miltonic Translations, as an Appendix to this volume. To render my account of those compositions the more satisfactory, I embraced every opportunity of giving it in the words of my departed friend.

In the autumn of 1791, he was invited by his bookseller, Mr. Johnson, to engage in the project of preparing a magnificent edition of Milton. The proposal had much to please, and little to alarm his

fancy; for he esteemed both the intelligence, and the integrity of the person, who was to conduct the business; and he was animated with a fervent desire to promote the glory of his favorite poet. Yet such was the genuine modesty, with which Cowper used to contemplate his own extraordinary mental powers, that his native diffidence induced him at first to decline the invitation. A letter that he wrote to Mr. Johnson, after thinking more deliberately on the subject, contains the following expressions.

"*Weston, Sept.* 6, 1791.

"*I have at length brought myself to something like a hope, that I may perhaps prove equal to this business, and in consequence have resolved to attempt it: but must depend on you for my implements. Newton's edition I have, but have nothing more.*"

Writing to his friend, Mr. Rose, in the same month, he thus completely explains the extent of his new undertaking.

"*The Lodge, Sept.* 14, 1791.

"*You, who know how necessary it is for me to be employed, will be glad to hear, that I have been called to a new literary engagement, and that I have not refused it. A Milton, that is*

to rival, and if possible to exceed in splendor Boydell's Shakespeare, is in contemplation; and I am in the editor's office. Fuseli is the painter. My business will be to select notes from others, and to write original notes; to translate the Latin and Italian poems, and to give a correct text. I shall have years allowed me to do it in."

Although the translator seems, in this letter, to have taken some pleasure in reflecting, that a great length of time was to be allowed for his performance, he had a mind naturally fervent, that loved to grapple itself, without delay, to a laudable enterprize, and not to recede from its work, while any part of it remained unfinished. With this spirit he immediately began his translations; and in November 1791, he thus informed his friend Mr. Hill how he advanced in the work.

"I have made a considerable progress in the translation of Milton's Latin poems. I give them, as opportunity offers, all the variety of measure, that I can. Some I render in heroic rhyme, some in stanzas, some in seven, and some in eight syllable measure, and some in blank verse. They will altogether, I hope, make an agreeable miscellany for the English reader. They are cer-

tainly good in themselves, and cannot fail to please but by the fault of the translator."

Cowper proceeded so chearfully in his work, that although he did not begin the series of his translations till towards the middle of September, 1791, he had nearly completed the whole before the end of that year.

On the 10th of December, he gave the following account of himself, and his advancing performance, to his friend Mr. Hurdis.

" I am much obliged to you for wishing that I were employed in some original work, rather than in translation. To tell the truth, I am of your mind; and unless I could find another Homer, I shall promise (I believe) and vow, when I have done with Milton, never to translate again. But my veneration for our great countryman is equal to what I feel for the Grecian; and consequently I am happy, and feel myself honorably employed whatever I can do for Milton. I am now translating his Epitaphium Damonis; a pastoral, in my judgement, equal to any of Virgil's bucolics, but of which Dr. Johnson (so it pleased him) speaks as I remember contemptuously. But he, who never saw any beauty in a rural scene,

was not likely to have much taste for a pastoral. —In pace quiescat!"

It appears probable from a subsequent letter to the same friend, that the whole series of Cowper's translations from Milton was completed in February 1792, for in that month, he said to Mr. Hurdis:

"*Milton at present engrosses me altogether. His Latin pieces I have translated, and have begun with the Italian: These are few and will not detain me long. I shall then proceed immediately to deliberate upon, and to settle, the plan of my commentary, which I have hitherto had but little time to consider.*"

Letters written before my first acquaintance with Cowper, have supplied the preceding account of the origin, and progress, of this posthumous publication; what I have yet to add concerning it will chiefly consist of a few particulars, that I learned in the course of my own intimacy with Cowper.

That intimacy commenced in consequence of my writing to him in February, 1792, on hearing, that we had been represented as rival biographers.

His reply to my first letter was liberal, and friendly, in so high a degree, that I shall indulge

an honest pride in transcribing the following passage:—

"I rejoice that you are employed to do justice to the character of a man, perhaps the chief of all, who have ever done honour to our country, and whose very name I reverence. Here we shall not clash, or interfere with each other, for a Life of Milton is no part of my bargain. In short we will cope with each other in nothing, but that affection, which you avow for me, unworthy of it as I am, and which your character and writings, and especially your kind letter have begotten in my heart for you.

"Every remark of yours on Milton will be highly valued by me."

The kindness of Cowper made me anxious to afford him all the encouragement, and assistance, in his new undertaking, that sympathy and friendship could supply. As Milton was to each of us an object of constant admiration, and at this time of immediate study, for different purposes, we mutually took a pleasure in animating each other to the prosecution of our respective works. In the summer of 1792, when Cowper was my guest in Sussex, our attention was doubly devoted to Milton, for after fulfilling my promise of imparting to my

friend that life of our favourite poet, in which I had then made some progress; I had the great pleasure of revising with him all his translations from the Latin and Italian poetry of Milton. We compared the versions continually with the originals, and the excellent translator in the course of this revisal made many considerable improvements in various parts of his work. Let me here remark, to the honour of Cowper, that with all his poetic powers, he was ever willing to receive, and to avail himself of friendly criticism, with a spirit equally modest and grateful. Our sentiments concerning the many compositions, which we examined together, were so happily in unison, that we had no difference of opinion upon any one poem of the diversified collection; and we most cordially agreed in thinking, that the verses addressed by Milton to his father are the most exquisite, and delightful, in the whole series of his Latin poetry. They have a peculiar tenderness and dignity of sentiment, united to the most delicate and powerful expression.

Of this charming poem, Dr. Symmons has added a translation in rhyme to his animated life of Milton. His translation has considerable merit; but my opinion of the respectable author's taste and candour is such, that I persuade myself he will agree with me in thinking the blank verse of Cowper, in expressing the same ideas, has more hap-

pily caught the sweetness and spirit of the original.

Another favorite of Cowper's, the Epitaphium Damonis, has been translated in part, and elegantly translated, by Langhorne; but, I trust, I am not influenced by any undue partiality in preferring the version of my friend.

He finished his revisal, and correction, of all the translated poems, while he was with me in Sussex: but at a period much later, and when his spirits had suffered the most deplorable depression, his compassionate kinsman, with whom he resided at Dereham, contrived to amuse his mind by reading to him these translations, and by inducing him to retouch a few passages. It is worthy of remark, that, dejected as he was, he made a considerable improvement in his conclusion of the Ode to Rouse, by new-modelling the four last lines. His kind relation added a memorandum with a pencil at the bottom of the page, by which it appears, that the improvement, I speak of, was made by Cowper on the 22d of August, 1798, a time, when the calamitous state of his health gave a peculiar interest to every exertion of his mind.

But to return to the happier season, when he spoke chearfully at Eartham of what he had already done, and what he intended to do, as an editor of Milton! Although the translations were completed,

the more burthensome part of his undertaking, a projected commentary, was hardly begun—but to this he looked forward with chearful hopes, and he thus expressed his own feelings on the subject in writing to Mr. Johnson.

"*Eartham, Aug.* 21, 1792.

"———— *Since our arrival here Mrs. Unwin has seemed daily to recover strength, so that I have hopes of carrying her back to Weston, about the middle of September, in such a state of health as will consist with a little more diligence and constancy on my part in the work, you have given me to do.*

"*I thank you for setting my heart at rest from the disquietude, I felt, when I wrote last, on the score of time, lest I should not be ready at the moment. I long nevertheless to be making a progress; and shall not allow myself to loiter merely because I am not pressed. In truth I have no wish at present more sincere, or ardent, than to finish my Miltonic labours, that I may find myself at full leisure for poetry, having learned by experience, that to divide my attention between two objects, is to give neither of them a sufficient share of it!*"

When Cowper first thought of forming a comi-

mentary on Milton, he felt the want of a proper collection of books for that purpose: but he had several friends, who took a pleasure in the hope of supplying him with every thing he could require: One sent him that rarity of Italian literature, the Adamo of Andreini. Another a copy of Bentley's Milton, containing many very severe censures, in manuscript, against the presumptuous editor, written probably when the book was published in 1732. These smothered embers of ancient animosity (to borrow a metaphor which Cowper used on another occasion) he was far from wishing to rekindle; for although he did not scruple to join a host of eminent writers in blaming the arrogance of Bentley, (in one of his letters he alludes, with much pleasantry, to the Doctor's contentious spirit) yet he considered the bitter squabbles of literary men as a disgrace to literature; and thought it most worthy of a scholar and a Christian, rather to suppress the hasty occasional virulence even of angry wit, than to give it new circulation.

The task of pointing out the numerous absurdities of Bentley, in his endeavour to improve the poetry of Milton, would not properly have belonged to Cowper, had he continued his commentary, because that painful task had been sufficiently, and temperately, performed by Doctor Pearce in his judicious "*Review of the Text of Paradise Lost.*"

When Bentley's unfortunate Milton first appeared, "it was received (says Mr. Todd) *with disgust and derision*!" It has given rise to various angry invectives against the veteran of criticism, who was at that time so far advanced in the vale of years, that he ought perhaps to have been universally treated with pity, rather than anger; for his Milton was a work of the great scholar's declining days, and seems to prove, that he was then sinking into that most pitiable dotage, to which the acutest of human minds are liable; especially those active minds, whose ardour may have hurried them into excesses of mental labour! But Bentley had rendered himself an object of much satirical indignation: he had indulged his spleen in the unbecoming, and perilous, habit of speaking very contemptuously of other eminent writers. He had superciliously offended an irritable race, whom however he regarded so highly, that he shewed something like a desire to be reckoned one of their tribe, for, in the preface to his Milton, he applied to himself the following words of a great poet.

"Sunt et mihi carmina; me quoque dicunt
Vatem pastores; sed non ego credulus illis."

Whatever might be the Doctor's credulity, or incredulity on this topic, he had the temerity to insult Pope in conversation, by calling his Homer a

pretty poem; and the insult was so powerfully avenged, that its punishment can never be forgotten.

The irritability of authors appears to have been in all ages, a subject of regret to their friends, but the author, whose posthumous work I am now introducing to the public, either happily escaped, or had the virtue to correct in himself that infectious failing which a Roman poet who had studied mankind has mentioned as a characteristic of his fraternity.

The pure mind of Cowper was a stranger, in its own feelings, to the common animosities of the world; and he was, on all occasions, evangelically disposed to promote peace, and good-will among men. How much he was influenced by an amiable desire to avoid what might awaken, or increase, enmity, and bitterness of spirit, he has shewn in the course of these translations from Milton, by omiting to translate compositions of extreme severity against the Catholics, and by thus declaring his reason for the omission.

" The Poems on the subject of the Gunpowder Treason I have not translated; both because the matter of them is unpleasant, and because they are written with an asperity, which, however it might be warranted in Milton's day, would be extremely unseasonable now!"

In writing to Mr. Johnson, on this subject, he explained his sentiments still further.

Weston, Oct. 30, 1791.

"We and the Papists are at present on amicable terms. They have behaved themselves peaceably many years, and have lately received favours from government: I should think therefore, that the dying embers of antient animosity had better not be troubled."

The translator likewise omitted a few of the minuter poems, which he thought not worthy of ranking with the rest; a privilege, that the editor has also exerted!

When Cowper was preparing to comment on the Paradise Lost, his bookseller furnished him with an interleaved copy of Newton's edition: in this he inserted a series of occasional remarks, proceeding regularly as far as the 341st line of the 3d book. When he was with me in Sussex, I suggested to him a little alteration in his plan, supposing that his projected work might be more pleasing, both to himself, and his readers, if he converted a multitude of notes into a few dissertations, devoting one to each book of the poem. He approved the suggestion, and resolved to pursue it on his return to Weston.

But the distress of heart, which he felt in contemplating the shattered state of his venerable companion, Mrs. Unwin, and his own declining health precluded him most severely from advancing in this, and other literary intentions. To every reader, who has proper compassion, and respect, for the calamities of afflicted genius, the following account, which Cowper gave me of his fruitless endeavour to proceed in his work, must be interesting, in no common degree.

"*Weston, Oct.* 2, 1792.

"*Yesterday was a day of assignation with myself, the day, of which I said, some days before it came, when that day comes, I will begin my dissertations. Accordingly when it came, I prepared to do so, filled a letter-case with fresh paper, furnished myself with a pretty good pen, and replenished my ink-bottle; but, partly from one cause, and partly from another, chiefly however from distress and dejection, after writing and obliterating about six lines, in the composition of which I spent near an hour, I was obliged to relinquish the attempt. An attempt so unsuccessful could have no other effect than to dishearten me, and it has had that effect to such a degree, that I know not, when I shall find courage to make another.*"

In a subsequent letter of the same month he says:—

"The consciousness, that there is much to do, and nothing done, is a burthen, I am not able to bear. Milton especially is my grievance; and I might almost as well be haunted by his ghost, as goaded with continual reproaches for neglecting him. I will therefore begin: I will do my best; and if, after all, that best prove good for nothing, I will even send the notes, worthless as they are, that I have made already."

Anxious, as Cowper was, to complete his design, the variety of avocations and afflictions, that encreased upon him in his latter years rendered such a completion impossible. Yet I have reason to believe, that he actually finished two of the intended dissertations: but they have unfortunately perished in the confusion of his papers, and I can only afford his reader the mournful gratification of perusing the imperfect notes, that I have mentioned.

These I believe every reader of taste will contemplate with a melancholy delight, for they are sufficient to shew, that the minds of Milton and Cowper were most truly congenial, and to excite a sincere regret, that a commentator so worthy of our divine bard was calamitously precluded from attend-

ing him according to his intention. Let us however enjoy, what he has happily accomplished! For my own part I am persuaded, that Milton could hardly receive an earthly honour more acceptable to his spirit, than the honour of having his Latin poems translated by Cowper. I feel a cordial satisfaction in beholding two poets so exquisite in genius, and so pure of heart, thus united in their posthumous renown. And hope these volumes may be found not unworthy of the two associated bards, who not only resembled each other in the purity and prevalence of their poetical talents, but in suffering as authors, though in very different degrees, both detraction and neglect:—The reputation of Milton in particular, after sinking like a Titan overwhelmed under mountains of obloquy and oppression, has arisen with all the energy of a giant refreshed by slumber, and taken its proper place of pre-eminence among the few names of universal celebrity, that are privileged to sleep no more.

APPENDIX.

NUMBER II.

A Latin Epitaph ascribed to Milton, with Cowper's opinion of it.

In March, 1793, when Cowper was preparing to publish his Milton, I sent him the Epitaph on Cardinal Mazarine, with the following account of the manner, in which it had then happened to engage my attention.

"A very intelligent, and friendly collector of scarce books, sent me, the other day, from his own library, a little old miscellany, published by Gildon in 1692, containing the Epitaph on Mazarine, ascribed to Milton, exactly as I enclose it to you. I perfectly remember reading the Epitaph, when I was young, and admiring it so much, that many detached lines of it remained in my memory. In hunting for it among my own books, I find it in a

miscellany of several volumes, entitled *State Poems*, printed in 1703. The Epitaph is not ascribed to any author in my book; but Milton is named, in the preface, as a contributor to the collection, and I find in the volume no other work that can be imputed to him."

Julii Mazirini Cardinalis Epitaphium, authore John Milton.

Hic jacet Julius Mazirinus,
Galliæ Rex Italus
Ecclesiæ Prœsul Laicus,
Europæ prædo purpuratus,
Fortunam omnem ambiit, omnem corrupit;
Ærarium administravit, et exhausit;
Civile bellum compressit, sed commovit;
Regni jura tuitus est, et invasit;
Beneficia possedit, et vendidit;
Pacem dedit aliquando, sed distulit,
Hostes cladibus, cives oneribus afflixit;
Arrisit paucis, irrisit plurimos,
Omnibus nocuit.
Negotiator in templo, Tyrannus in Regno,
Prædo in Ministerio,
Vulpes in Consilio,
Grassator in Bello,
Solus nobis in pace hostis.
Fortunam olim adversam, aut elusit aut vicit;

Et nostro seculo vidimus
Adorari fugitivum,
Imperare civibus exulem,
Regnare proscriptum.
Quid deinde egerit, rogas? Paucis accipe.
Lusit, fefellit, rapuit:
Ferreum nobis seculum induxit, sibi ex auro nostro [3]
Aureum fecit. [4]
Quorundam capiti, nullius fortunis pepercit, [5]
Homo crudeliter clemens;
Pluribus tandem morbis elanguit,
Plures ei mortes cœlo irrogante, [6]
Cui Senatus olim unam decreverat: [7]
Vincenni se arcibus inclusit moriturus; [8]
Id quidem apte [9]
Quæ sivit carcerem;
Diu lædentem animam retinuit, ægre reddidit, [10]
Sic retinere omnia didicerat,
Nil suâ sponte reddere.
Constanter tamen visurus est mori, quid mirum? [11]
Ut vixit sic obiit dissimulans,
Ne morbum quidem novere qui curabant;
Hac unâ fraude nobis profuit;
Fefellit Medicos;
Mortuus est tamen, ni fallimur; moriens
Regem regno, Regnum Regi restituit;
Reliquit
Præsulibus pessima exampla,

Aulicis infidæ consilia,
Adoptivo amplissima spolia, [12]
Paupertatem Populis;
Successoribus suis omnes prædandi artes,
Sed prædam nullam.
Immensas tamen opes licet profuderit,
Id unum habuit ex suo quod daret,
Nomen suum.
Pectus ejus post mortem apertum est;
Tunc primum patuit vafrum cor
Mazirini,
Quod nec precibus, nec lacrymis, nec injuriis moveretur,
Diu quæsivimus, invenere medici
Cor Lapideum.
Quod mortuus ad huc omnia moveat, et administret
ne mireris,
Stipendia in hunc annum recepit,
Nec fraudat post mortem bona fidei: [13]
Quo tandem evaserit forsitan, rogas;
Cœlum (si rapitur) tenet, si datur meritis, longe abest.
Sed abi, Viator et cave;
Nam hic tumulus
Est Specus Latronis.

Readings in another Copy.

[1] Galliæ Rex Italicus.

[2] Pacem dedit aliquando, diu distulit.

[5] Ferreum nobis induxit, sœculum sibi
[4] Ex auro nostro aureum fecit.
[5] Quorundam Capitibus, nullins fortunis pepercit.
[6] Plures ei a Cælo mortes erogatæ,
[7] Cui Senatus olim unam tantum decreverat.
[8] Vicentinis se arcibus inclusit moriturus.
[9] Et quidem apte.
[10] Diu cedentem animam retinuit, ægre reddidit,
[11] Constanter tamen visus est mori, quid mirum?
[12] Adoptiva amplissima spolia.
[13] Nec fraudat post mortem vir bonus fidei.

Extract of a letter from Cowper.

March 19, 1793.

"*Thanks for Mazarine's Epitaph: It is full of witty Paradox, and is written with a force and severity which sufficiently bespeak the author. I account it an inestimable curiosity, and shall be happy, when time shall serve, with your aid to make a good translation of it—But that will be a stubborn business—Adieu.*"

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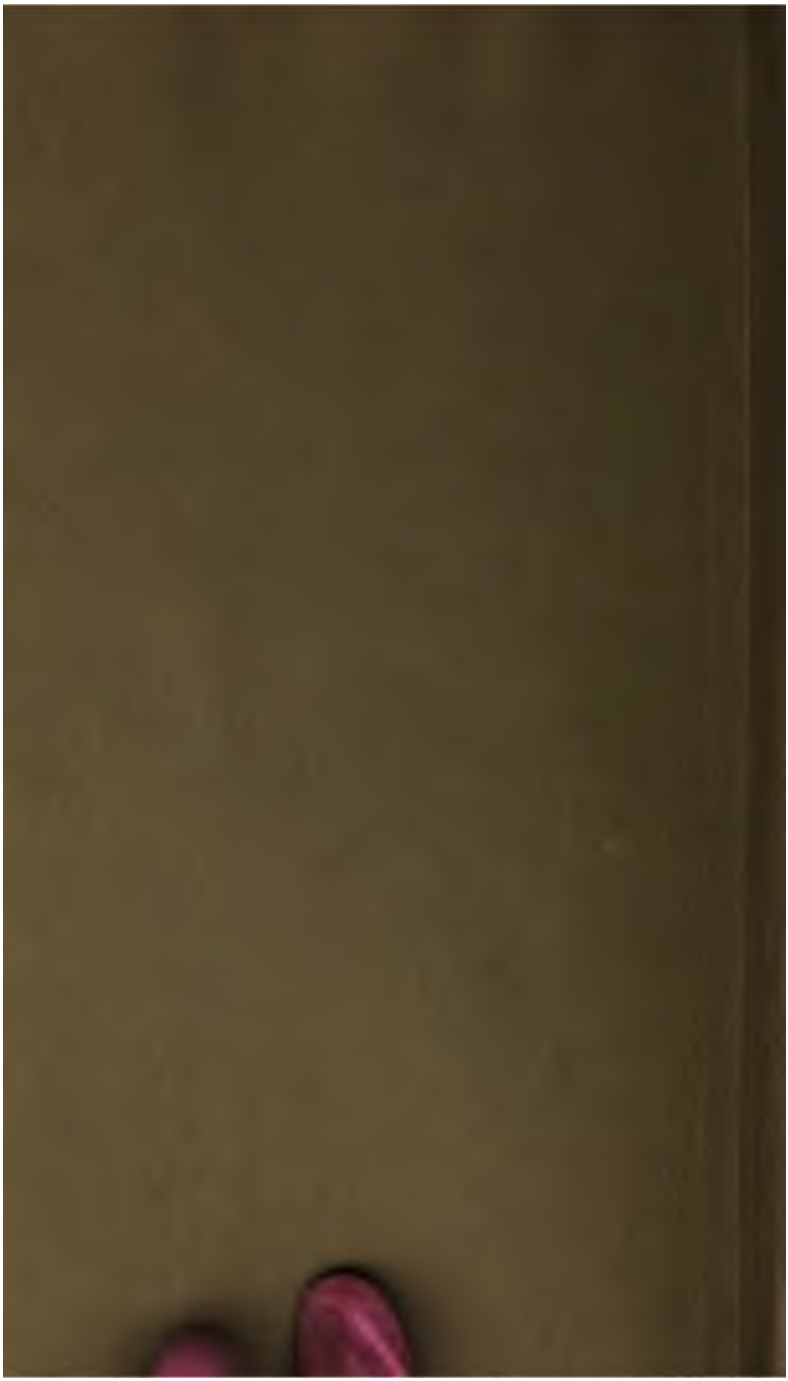

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